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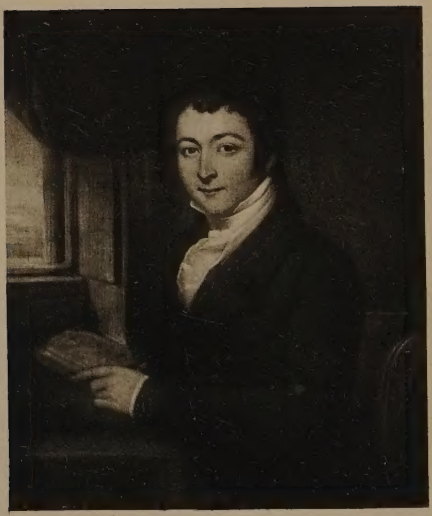

Thomas Campbell.

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POEMS

OF

THOMAS CAMPBELL

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TO MY FAR-OFF COUSINS

'FOUND TOO LATE'

T. B. C., M. G. B., E. C. M. C., L. F. K. H., G. M.

SURVIVING RELATIVES OF THOMAS CAMPBELL

THIS SELECTION FROM HIS POEMS

IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED

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INTRODUCTION

Even I . . .
Was reckoned, a considerable time,
The grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme.
. . . . . .
Sir Walter reigned before me; Moore and Campbell
Before and after.

BYRON in *Don Juan*, Canto xi.

OBLIVION is the Nemesis of over-praise. Poets once in all men's mouths "suffer not thinking on." Yet time may rescue from forgetfulness some morsels that have the quality of not perishing. Thomson's *Seasons* may still find readers, while his *Sophonisba* and his *Tancred* (made popular by Garrick) have joined the majority of plays. But Waller, heralded by Dryden, and Shenstone, the admired of Burns—who thinks of reading them to-day? This reflection is inevitable for one who undertakes to recommend a selection from Thomas Campbell's poems in the twentieth century; although not sixty years ago his countrymen thought him worthy of a public funeral, a grave in Poets' Corner, and a statue in Westminster Abbey.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century, when Burns had been dead two years, and Cowper was dying, two volumes of poetry claimed the attention of British

readers; one published in Bristol, and one in Edinburgh: *The Lyrical Ballads* (September 1798) and *The Pleasures of Hope* (April 1799). The latter was received with acclamation, the former with derision. And yet, if one hundred and five years are sufficient witnesses, it was with the Bristol volume that the promise of the future lay.

It was unfortunate for Campbell that when his ambition was roused to the production of a serious poem the prevailing taste should have induced him to adopt a form so soon to be discredited. The star of Pope still held the meridian, while that of Wordsworth was hardly visible above the horizon; and in consequence of some serio-comic pieces which he wrote at College, young Campbell had been dubbed by his companions "the Pope of Glasgow."

His essentially lyric genius was thus diverted into an alien channel.

His native gift of melodious speech had been cultivated from boyhood through the assimilation of classical poetry, Latin, Greek, and English, and through the practice of translation in verse. But the first outburst of an original poetic vein in him came during the two summers which he spent in the West Highlands and in the Island of Mull. The communion with Nature, begun in childhood, was then revived and greatly enlarged, and those were the years that opened for him

> "The promise of the golden hours,
> First love, first friendship, equal powers."

Another and a nobler passion had a yet stronger hold on him—the love of freedom and hatred of oppression. While still a young student he had walked to Edinburgh with a companion to witness the trial of Muir and Gerald for high treason, and had heard them condemned on what appeared to him insufficient evidence. From that

hour he was devoted to the cause of Liberty. Milder ardours were eclipsed in the manly resolution that breathes in the lines—

> "Shame to the coward thought that e'er betrayed
> The noon of manhood to a myrtle shade!"

Here, then, was a true poet, fully answering to Tennyson's description:—

> "Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
> The love of love."

And he was expected to cast his warm imaginings and fervid thoughts into the mould of the *Essay on Man*. The result was a series of fine passages, with here and there an unforgettable line. But the poem as a whole is rather tacked together than created. Campbell had not the architectonic gift. But to which poet of the early nineteenth century was it really given? Even in wandering through Wordsworth's great "cathedral" we linger in the side chapels to worship phantoms of delight and reverend forms, paternal or pathetic, but are apt to lose ourselves in the vast unlighted spaces of the main building.

The youth had been at a loss for a profession. Divinity was unattractive, Medicine repellent, and the Law was impossible without capital, which he could not command in consequence of his father's losses through the American War. Private tuition, the usual resource of the Scottish student, he had never contemplated as an employment for a lifetime. Now his path was clearly marked towards a literary career. In the first flush of his success he made some engagements with Edinburgh publishers and started on a continental tour. Even the brittle peace of Amiens was not yet, and plans for foreign travel had to reckon with war. He was disappointed in

his hope of making personal acquaintance with Wieland and Burger, perhaps also with Schiller and Goethe; and after a long pause at Hamburg he took refuge with a college of Scotch monks at Ratisbon. From the walls of that city he witnessed a fierce encounter between French and Austrian troops, and saw the battlefield after the engagement—not comforted by Red Cross ambulances. To the excitement and the horror of that twofold sight we owe the lyrics of *Hohenlinden* and the *Soldier's Dream*. (Though he visited the valley of the Iser, he was not present at the battle of which he wrote.)

At Hamburg, and afterwards at Altona, then a Danish town, he consorted with some of the "men of '98," especially one Antony Macan, with whom he used to walk along the banks of the Elbe. Thence came the inspiration for the *Exile of Erin*, and, to judge from internal evidence, also for another poem, published long afterwards, which has attracted less attention than it deserves. *The Death-Boat of Heligoland*, based on a Scandinavian legend, and more vituperative than is usual with Campbell except in defence of Poland, may compare favourably in poetic fire and *verve* with other lampoons of revolutionary poets on Tory administration. Once more, the time he spent in Denmark and the outbreak of the war which sent him home have much to do with the production shortly after this of *Ye Mariners of England* and *The Battle of the Baltic*. Residence abroad had added a glow of patriotism to the poetic *stimuli* of love and liberty. These lyrics, which are now reckoned amongst his titles to fame, probably appeared to him at the time only as sparks from his anvil. For he was meditating two laborious works, one dull but remunerative—a continuation of Hume's and Smollett's history; the other an ambitious and somewhat perilous venture, an heroic poem to be entitled

The Queen of the North. This was to have been a sort of epic of Scottish history, revolving round the praise of Edinburgh; but, as the sequel proved, the task was beyond his powers. His reading in preparation for the grand attempt may, however, have suggested to him the subject of *Lochiel's Warning.*

He also made a serious study of German poetry, and even spent three months over the philosophy of Kant. But the namesake of Dr. Thomas Reid, the Scottish philosopher of Common Sense—who christened him, and (with the author of *The Wealth of Nations*) was his father's friend—could not be impressed as Coleridge was by the new metaphysic. On the other hand, the romantic movement in German poetry made an impression which may be traced in some of his subsequent work.

Returning in a vessel bound for Leith, but chased into Yarmouth by a Danish privateer, he made his first visit to London; but was soon recalled to Edinburgh in consequence of his father's death. Suspected of seditious tendencies, he succeeded in clearing himself. *Ye Mariners* had by this time been written, and was published shortly afterwards in the *Morning Chronicle* under the following title: "Alteration of the old ballad 'Ye Gentlemen of England,' composed in prospect of the commencement of a Russian War."

Early in 1803 he left the Northern metropolis for the Southern capital. This bold step was partly due to the encouragement of Lord Minto, the only patron Campbell ever knew. It was a relationship which he could not bear for long. Sir Walter Scott, always his kind and generous friend, wrote of this long afterwards in the famous Journal:—

"Tom Campbell lived at Minto. But it was in a state of dependence which he brooked very ill. He was kindly treated, but would not see it in the right view, and suspected slights and so on, where

no such thing was meant. There was . . . a kind of waywardness and irritability about Tom that must have made a man of his genius truly unhappy."

The fierce sensitiveness which he showed in his quarrel with Leyden was still untamed in him. (See also Beattie's *Life*, vol. i. p. 247.)

In London he found the employment he looked for and made new friends. He was kindly received at Holland House, and the Whig notabilities who gathered there had tact enough to bring out his social gifts without jarring upon his naïve independence.

After some months of restless bachelorhood he married his cousin, Matilda Sinclair, on 10th September 1803. The seven years that followed, although chequered with illness and exhausting work, were the happiest of his life. After twelve months in Pimlico he settled with his wife at Sydenham, then a country village, where the birth of two boys, in both of whom, especially the younger, Alison, he took all a father's pride, and the warm friendship of congenial neighbours, completed the environment of a peaceful English home. In 1809 he ventured again before the public with *Gertrude of Wyoming*, *Ye Mariners*, *Glenara*, *The Battle of the Baltic*, *Lochiel*, *Hohenlinden*, and *Lord Ullin's Daughter*, and in a new edition early in 1810 he added a beautiful poem produced in the interim, *O'Connor's Child*.

Gertrude of Wyoming is a pastoral poem of an original cast in the Spenserian stanza, handled not heroically as by Spenser, but in a quieter vein, more resembling the manner of Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*. The subject, an incident in the American War, seems to have harmonized with some suggestion from a German tale, and is more or less akin to such romances as St. Pierre's *Paul and Virginia* or Chateaubriand's *Atala*, which are

conceived in the spirit of Rousseau. But the substance of the work is Campbell's own. His sympathy with American independence, his hatred of oppression and impatience of the burden of conventionalisms, and his abhorrence of a cruel criminal code, combine with an intense appreciation of all that is genuinely human, whether in civilised or uncivilised life, to create an atmosphere of singular purity and charm. The story is slightly sketched, and there is little of realistic detail, but the contrast between the life of the affections abstracted from all that can degrade or vulgarise, and the solitary strength of the "Stoic of the woods, a man without a tear," is drawn with equal delicacy and firmness.

His Muse was still in her ascendant, and it is time to take stock of his achievement so far. No friend, however daring, could venture nowadays to endorse the high encomiums of Scott and Goethe, although the present writer once heard Robert Browning—most high-hearted of poets, most chivalrous of men—speak of Campbell as "a great man." He is something less than great, but he has elements of greatness.

That poems so different in kind as *The Pleasures of Hope* and *Gertrude* should have been produced within ten years, each having its distinct and incommunicable flavour and *cachet*, is of itself a remarkable proof of versatility. And, to speak more generally, the range of the few poems already named is not a narrow one. But there is more to say.

(1) His work has the ring of absolute sincerity. There is heart in it. A native generosity breathes in every line, giving assurance of "that primal sympathy which, having been, must ever be." It cannot be said of him that "his soul was like a star and dwelt apart." He was not self-centred or self-sufficing, nor in any high degree self-conscious, nor largely contemplative. He

was nothing if not a social being. To that he owed much of his strength and weakness. His was not the poetry of self-pity, nor could he have filled huge canvases, as Byron did, with the Brocken-like image of his own magnified personality. His interest was in his brothers and sisters of mankind. Their joys and sorrows, their aspirations and their wrongs, alone gave inspiration to his verse.

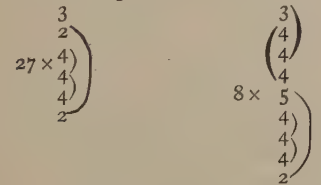
(2) He is a learned poet. Sydney Smith observed of him, "What a vast field of literature that man's mind has rolled over"; and Charles James Fox, who was no mean scholar, when introduced to him at Holland House, said afterwards, "I like Campbell, he is so right about Virgil." He had absorbed the marrow of Greek poetry as a youth at Glasgow, and in later life "a Homer and a salt herring" were indispensable to his comfort at breakfast-time. How many young Grecians of to-day, with the help of a century of commentaries, could improve on the translation of Aesch. *Cho.* lines 22-69, which he wrote in his seventeenth year?

> "Heard ye wild Horror's hair-erecting scream
> Re-echo dismal, from his distant cell?
> Heard ye the spirit of the nightly dream
> Shriek to the solemn hour a long resounding yell?"

Had it not been for the *afflatus* which came over him in consequence of his friend Hamilton Paul's suggestion of *The Pleasures of Hope*, he had intended to bring out an edition of Greek plays which might have landed him in a Professorship, possibly at St. Andrews! The classical texts printed by the brothers Foulis, now treasures of the bibliophile, were then accessible in Glasgow at the fountain-head. In later years he learned Spanish as well as Italian, and attempted Arabic. He tried no direct imitation of classical forms, no Pindaric

odes, no "barbarous experiments," but he had learned from his Greek masters the secret of uniting brevity with clearness and subtlety with simplicity.

He was an excellent critic, especially of his own work. He wrote much which never saw the light. Dr. Beattie, in some MS. notes which have been confided to me, enumerates forty-six unpublished pieces, from some of which he has quoted in the *Life*. Scott characteristically complained that Campbell was "a great corrector"; and Jeffrey told him that his faults were those of over-finishing and not of negligence; but in some cases, certainly, he corrected with good effect. There is an instructive difference between the first sketch of *The Battle of the Baltic*, shown to Scott in a letter of 27th March 1805, and the finished piece as published in 1809. Twenty-seven stanzas of six lines each have been condensed into eight stanzas of nine. The change of form may be indicated as in the following scheme—the figures denoting the number of accents in each line, and the brackets marking the lines that rhyme together :—



All the more striking expressions are retained; most of what was weak, and there was much, has been ejected, and the introduction of the central long line (*μεσῳδός*) to balance the concluding short one (*ἐπῳδός*) is a stroke of rhythmical skill of which Sophocles would have approved.

In the second stanza, lines 1 and 3 fail to rhyme. This is hardly observed, and the poet showed good judgment in not tinkering a fine phrase to remedy a trivial flaw (cp. *Lycidas*, lines 1, 15, 22, 51).

The *syncope* or antispastic turn in the long line

> "And her arms along the deep proudly shone,"
> "Their shots along the deep slowly boom,"

has a specially beautiful effect.

Yet in the poem thus condensed there is some loss of vividness and distinctness. Here, for example, are five of the original verses—

> "Another noble fleet
> Of their line
> Rode out, but these were nought
> To the batteries which they brought,
> Like leviathans afloat
> In the brine.
>
> "It was ten of Thursday morn
> By the chime,
> As they drifted on their path
> There was silence deep as death,
> And the boldest held his breath
> For a time,
>
> "Ere a first and fatal round
> Shook the flood;
> Every Dane looked out that day,
> Like the red wolf on his prey,
> As he swore his flag to sway
> O'er our blood.
>
> "Not such a mind possessed
> England's tar;
> 'Twas the love of noble game
> Set his oaken heart on flame,
> For to him 'twas all the same
> Sport and war.

> " All hands and eyes on watch
> As they keep;
> By their motion light as wings,
> By each step that haughty springs,
> You might know them for the kings
> Of the deep!"

The reader is brought nearer to the actual event; and the use of the word "bulwarks," which has been criticized, is explained as referring to the floating batteries, which might well recall Milton's "Leviathan," rather than to the ship's broadsides.

In the case of other poems his corrections are not always equally happy. In *Gertrude*, for example, Part II., stanza xii., the first edition had

> " For, *save her presence*, not an ear had heard
> The stock-dove plaining through its gloom profound;
> Or winglet of the fairy humming-bird,
> Like atoms of the rainbow fluttering round."—

Some friendly critic seems to have observed that "atoms of the rainbow" are seen, not heard. But when, to avoid this trivial incoherence, the poet wrote

> " And nought within the grove was seen or heard
> But stock-doves plaining through its gloom profound,"

the disappearance of the solitary figure of Gertrude, although momentary, obliterated a beautiful touch.

(3) Campbell is a poet of the centre. If he betrayed some personal waywardness, his muse was not wayward, and is apt, therefore, to be censured as commonplace. But that is an erroneous notion. Extravagance and oddity may win applause more readily, but the poetry which lasts is that which comes sweetly off from Nature and goes straight from the heart to the heart. The best work of Campbell will stand this test, and he is not to be disparaged as a poet because, in spite of

constitutional susceptibilities, he remained true not only to the cause of liberty and humanity, but also "to the kindred points of heaven and home"—a good son and brother, a faithful friend, an affectionate husband, a most tender father.

In the laudatory and yet discriminating notice with which the *Edinburgh Review* welcomed *Gertrude of Wyoming*, it was truly observed that the author was "a poet of greater promise than performance," and the youthful Byron, in exempting Scott, Rogers, Crabbe, and Campbell from his castigation of English bards and Scotch reviewers, had thus apostrophized the last-named "bard":—

> "Come forth, O Campbell! give thy talents scope;
> Who dares aspire if thou must cease to hope?"

It remains to account for the undoubted fact that after so brilliant an opening this poet produced so little, and during the last thirty years of life failed adequately to justify his early reputation.

(1) One obvious cause was his absorption in journalism and in literary tasks, that brought him profit but no renown. Though fitful in such work, he certainly was not idle. In his letters he speaks of working from four to six hours at a stretch, and as much as ten or twelve hours a day. One cannot labour like that over prosaic themes and hope to keep the freshness of poetic inspiration. As Campbell himself has said of Smollett's later years—

> He seems to have felt that he could depend for subsistence more securely on works of industry than originality, and he engaged in voluntary drudgeries, which added nothing to his fame, whilst they made inroads on his health and equanimity.

This remark occurs in the only prose work which

Campbell undertook spontaneously, the series of lives prefixed to his selection from the English poets. The little volume in which these morsels are collected is still worth reading; see especially the lives of Gray, Akenside, and Cowper. Some writers of introductions to more recent anthologies might have done well to consult them.

(2) Another hindrance to original work and mental growth was the society of London. Campbell was before everything, as I have said, a social being. He was witty and brilliant in conversation, and he was welcomed everywhere. The evenings at Holland House may have been more stimulating than distracting; but certain journalistic *soirées* were a different thing. To travel by coach from Sydenham to London and back on literary errands, talking all the way, and to give whole mornings to writing for the *Star* newspaper could not fail to turn his powers aside into shallower channels. Plain living and high thinking—a wise passiveness, even if such a thing were possible for Campbell—could not be made compatible with such a life. And to tell the honest truth, he had never steadily adopted that ideal. When to this is added his liability to a form of insomnia called *coma-vigil* (in Italian *dormiveglia*), which haunted him for many years, it will appear less strange that his genius did not hold its bent.

The hack-work was at first rendered necessary by pecuniary circumstances. He was dependent on his own exertions for support, and he married early. And although afterwards, with the addition of a Crown pension, his income was by no means contemptible, he never quite escaped from money difficulties. He was not exactly improvident, for he was always looking forward, but it was in anticipation of future gains. His charities were boundless, and he contributed largely to the support of

his mother and two sisters, the elder of whom he survived only by a year.

It was a humorous caprice of Campbell's, as of some other writers, to denounce the illiberality of publishers. It might have been better for him if they had paid him less handsomely for mechanical work. They doubtless knew their interest in exploiting what for a time was an illustrious name. But had he been more constant to his poetic calling, had he bethought him of his mother's frugality, had he declined responsibilities for which his sensitiveness and excitability unfitted him, and had he more often sought the benefit of retirement and of communion with Nature,—that name, not yet obscured, would have shone more brightly. No man is a hero to his amanuensis, and the reminiscences of Cyrus Redding, his sub-editor of the *New Monthly*, contain some depressing passages. But a truer conception of the real man in his later phase may be obtained from the record of conversations with friends in Edinburgh which Dr. Beattie has preserved in his third volume, pp. 252-256.

Campbell's modest estimate of his own achievements, the sobriety of his judgments on Rogers, Southey, Wordsworth, his enthusiastic admiration of Burns, his reverence for Scott, the depth and constancy of his best affections, appear in those few pages convincingly; and, however much one may regret them, the poet's editorial labours were not fruitless. Besides some of his own minor pieces his magazine was the medium for much of Mrs. Hemans's poetry and of Hazlitt's prose, and it was here that Campbell promulgated the conception, which he always claimed as his own, of a University for London—an idea which is only now approaching worthy realization. Adopted, indeed monopolized, by Brougham, it was thwarted and transformed by the religious difficulty; but the "Teaching University" which has now been inaugu-

rated bids fair to become an adequate embodiment of the poet's ideal.

A further proof of his ripe critical discernment outgrowing prejudice may be inserted here. He long held aloof from the theories of the Lake school, but at a breakfast party in his rooms in March 1842, where the poets Moore and Rogers and Dean Milman were present, it was agreed by all that "Wordsworth was a great poet." (See Beattie's *Life*, vol. iii. p. 329.) Not less characteristic, and dating from an earlier period, is the affectionate veneration for a very different poet, his elder by twelve years, expressed in Campbell's letter to Crabbe of 25th June 1817 (*æt.* 40). (See the *Life of the Rev. George Crabbe*, by his son, in Murray's 1 vol. edition of *Crabbe*, p. 67.)

Apart from literary and social engagements there was another cause more potent to disable him. *His heart was broken.*

Sir Walter Scott, when the shadow of his own misfortune was closing round him, remained sufficiently at leisure from himself to care for the reputation of a brother poet. One June evening, when the purpling sunset lingered over the Ochils, he walked forth amidst the very scenes which had suggested "'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view." Soothed by the beauty of the hour, he repeated to himself a verse from Campbell's *Turkish Lady*—

> "Day its sultry fires had wasted,
> Calm and cool the moonlight rose:
> Even a captive's bosom tasted
> Half oblivion of its woes."

And he proceeded to speculate, as he had done ten years before, on the reasons of Campbell's limited performance.

But in London, some months afterwards, Scott heard news of Campbell which threw a different light on his

unproductiveness. The following entry occurs in the Journal for 28th April 1828:—

"Tom Campbell is in miserable plight, his son insane, his wife on the point of becoming so: *I nunc et versus tecum meditare canoros!*"

"Go now, and meditate the tuneful Muse!" Of many instances of true-hearted feeling in the most generous of men, this remark of Scott's, made in the solitude of his chamber and confided to his diary, is one of the most striking, and certainly the most pathetic. Few authors have been thus solicitous for the renown of another. Only the greatest have justified Plato's saying, "Jealousy has no place in the celestial choir." The reader will have observed that, in speaking of his friend, Scott always uses the caressing diminutive "Tom."

But to return to our story: Sir Walter did not know all. In 1810 the two children, who had spent an evening with neighbours at Sydenham, returned in a torrent of rain protected by a cloak which had been infected with malignant fever. The younger, Alison, the namesake of Campbell's life-long friend, died in a few days, and the first-born, Thomas Telford, called after the famous engineer—whether from this or from some other cause—was never afterwards quite himself. Mrs. Campbell died ten days after the date of the above entry in Scott's private journal.

The following incident, communicated to Dr. Beattie by Mr. Buckley Williams, occurred in the same year (1828). Mr. Williams wrote:—

"I became first acquainted with Mr. Campbell in consequence of his cousin, Capt. Robert Campbell, having married a lady of Montgomeryshire. He asked me to dine with him at the club, and while we took a walk together, he asked me many questions about Wales, . . . observing that he had long intended to visit the Principality. 'You have told me,' said he, 'about the early bards; . . . can you give me some anecdote of a modern Welshman?' I

told him the following: In Towyn, Merionethshire, dwelt Griffith Owen, an excellent performer on the old Welsh harp. He had seen more than eighty winters, but sorrow was in store for him. His wife was seized with mortal illness, and within a few days carried to the grave. His son very shortly after became a raving maniac. One clear, cold, frosty night a gentleman was crossing Towyn heath, and saw before him some object moving. Coming nearer, he heard a low groan, and there stood, tottering with age, the venerable figure of Griffith Owen. 'Griffith,' said the gentleman, 'what can have brought you at such an hour to this dreary place?' The old man instinctively replied in a Welsh triad, 'My wife is dead, my son is mad, my harp is unstrung!'

In an instant the words shot through Campbell's heart. It came home to him like an electric shock. He could not, he said, disguise his weakness—he cried like a child."

Yes, "The harp was unstrung"; for Campbell had not the huge self-confidence of Wordsworth, or the reckless force of Byron; nor was he one of those who learn in suffering what they are to teach in song. He sang best when he was happiest. Then his muse went forth in sympathy with other men—real men and women, not an abstract Humanity. And it must be confessed that, to begin with, his genius had not great volume or much staying power. The Celtic temperament, even when blended with the Norman, is "soon kindled and soon burned." Once only, in 1831, about three years after the extinction of his domestic hearth, his verse regained somewhat of its former power and sweetness. He had sought refuge from the distractions of his London life in a lodging at St. Leonards-on-Sea, and the Polish revolution, while already in progress, had not yet been crushed. In two fine poems, the lines *On the View from St. Leonards* and *On the Camp Hill near Hastings*, we catch a glimpse of what the world has lost from the causes above mentioned and through the whirl of feverish excitement which surrounded him in this and the following years.

For the cause of Polish freedom, which rekindled his imagination, was a less unmingled source of poetic utterance than the same passion had been to him in the days of his youth. The poems on this subject were produced amidst a turmoil of agitation, and the fire in them burns with a lurid and unkindly glare. Only one of them is included in the present selection—*The Power of Russia.* This certainly contains some notable lines :—

> "Norwegian woods shall build
> His fleets ; the Swede his vassal, and the Dane ;
> The glebe of fifty kingdoms shall be till'd
> To feed his dazzling, desolating train,
> Camp'd sumless, 'twixt the Black and Baltic main :
> . . . . . .
> The stripling Titan, strengthening year by year,
> . . . . . .
> Whom Persia bows to, China ill confines,
> And India's homage waits, when Albion's star declines."

That forecast is no less significant at the present hour, when the "Titan" is no longer a "stripling."

An incident which banished grief for a while was his twice-repeated election in 1826 and the two following years by the students of Glasgow University as their Lord Rector. In this office he anticipated some reforms which have since improved the position of the Scottish student. On one of these occasions an attempt was made by his opponents to bring forward Sir Walter Scott, who regarded the matter with indifference, and could not understand "Tom's" exultation.

Campbell's affection for the scenes of his youth, the warmth of his sympathies, and his keen response to any sign of love are well exemplified in this brief passage of his career. His whole nature responded to the Glasgow students, who idolized him in their turn. A contemporary anecdote shows the effect produced on the

average Scottish mind. In an accidental *fracas* between Campbell and a stranger, a policeman was called in. Campbell's companion said, "This is Mr. Campbell, the poet." "'Od, mon!" said the officer, who proved to be a Scotsman, "is this the great Lord Rector of Glasgow?"—Calder Marshall's statue in Westminster Abbey represents the poet in his Rectorial robes.

The poet gradually recovered a measure of equanimity, and even of outward gaiety, and at one time it seemed as if the breakage might be "handsomely pieced," to use Scott's phrase in another connection. But this hope also failed him through some misadventure, and the inward spontaneous buoyancy was never renewed. Can we wonder that his later publications were disappointing to his friends, or that he was grievously disappointed at the reception of them, or that some superficial weaknesses, due to an excitable temperament and to various antecedents, should have exposed him to the mockery of another Scotsman of genius, who dealt to him the same hard measure as to dear Charles Lamb?

The flaws in Campbell's workmanship were less perceptible to his generation than they are to ours. Some of his peculiarities would be as strange in a poem of 1899 as the blue surtout with gilt buttons, the white waistcoat, and the nankeens of his most Whiggish days.

We have accepted the doctrine of the shortest chapter in De Banville's (or in any) treatise on the art of poetry, "*Licences Poétiques*—Il n'y en a pas." But to speak of poetic diction as "artificial" is not to condemn it, unless the term is used in a question-begging sense. Homeric diction, with all its freshness, is highly artificial and studiously adapted to the requirements of hexameter verse. The dramatic language of Sophocles is not that which he talked whether at Athens or in Chios. Already

in Æschylus there is the tendency "to call things out of their names," which became an abuse in the *Nomos* of Timotheos. The epithet takes the place of the noun, the genus of the species. Fish, for example, in the *Persae* are "the voiceless children of the unpolluted one." Elizabethan euphuism was an elaborate artifice, the offspring of a creative instinct, which pervaded English poetry throughout its highest bloom. Dante formed out of the Tuscan dialect a poetic diction which educated Italians everywhere understand. But in Italy, more than elsewhere, the language of literature stands apart from common speech, while the medium of cultured intercourse is different from both.

The poet's function is to mould human speech into new forms of beauty. Wordsworth, by his theory, much more than by his practice, exploded some outworn traditions; but in doing so he opened the way for artifices of another kind, in which individual caprice was apt to replace familiar convention.

Keats, the most poetic of the new brotherhood, began by borrowing from the Elizabethans modes of speech which he only partly understood. It was by degrees that he learned how without forcing the note to fill every cranny with "the ore of poetry." Burns, with a similar ambition, had written of "the tenebrific scene"; and we are told by Mr. W. A. Craigie, who ought to know, that the language of "Scots wha hae" is not pure Scotch, either Highland or Lowland. Campbell, while adhering generally to earlier modes of art, had special mannerisms of his own. Personification, so rife in the eighteenth century poetry, was natural to his Celtic genius; and such means of condensation as the use of the possessive for the genitive case—"Ulva's Isle," "twilight's contemplative mood,"—or of the adverb for the adjective; such forms as "cultureless," inversions (from which

Wordsworth was not free), and the recurrence of certain favourite words and phrases, such as bland, elate, glittering, true to, sublime, are features which appear affected to readers of to-day; and so does the use of unfamiliar names: Sarmatia, Lochlin, Albin, Innisfail, chosen partly for the sake of sound. Local names and associations have become fixed for us by frequent travel, and in Scotland particularly the railway companies have prescribed forms of orthography as unlike the Gaelic as any inventions of the poet. But Jeffrey was right in saying to him, *à propos* of *Gertrude*, "the most dangerous faults are your faults of diction."

Except when revisiting in thought the Western Highlands, Campbell's descriptions of scenery are sometimes inconsistent. His natural history is inexact. The beaver does not build on rocks, and we are in the habit of distinguishing more accurately than he does the different species and habitats of the feline carnivora.

His attitude towards science generally is characteristic of a transitional epoch. Sincerely reverencing the genius of Newton and of Sir William Herschel, he yet clings to the popular conception of the rainbow, and complains

> "When science from Creation's face
> Enchantment's veil withdraws,
> What lovely visions yield their place
> To cold material laws."

He is not careful, as Tennyson was, to adjust language to astronomical fact. To him, as to the uneducated, the first appearance of a celestial object is its *rise*, though in relation to the observer it is really setting. So, in the second of the poems to *Caroline*, the Evening Star is adjured to "appear"

> "And early rise and long delay
> When Caroline herself is here."

And in the *Exile of Erin*, to the confusion of editors, the "day-star," by which the evening star is meant (though the word properly signifies either "sun" or "morning star"), is seen from Altona to "rise" in the direction of Ireland. In writing to a friend on the same subject, many years later, Campbell himself said, "Tony and I repaired to the spot where we had often walked when the day-star (*sic*) was *setting* in the west" (*Life*, vol. ii. pp. 42-45). But "set" is a small insignificant word, and "rose" fills the ear much better. The poet is by no means singular in his error—or his concession to a popular fallacy. The realist Tolstoy, without the excuse of metre, makes his hero delay a confidential communication "until the evening star shall have risen on the horizon"! How many persons in the twentieth century make the same mistake about the new moon? In a recent poem, full of local colour, the following line occurs :—

"And the waning moon is setting behind the rubber tree."

Wordsworth may after all assist us here—"The appropriate business of poetry . . . is to treat of things not as they *are* but as they appear: not as they exist in themselves, but as they seem to exist to the *senses* and to the *passions*." And the illusion in question is really, for many persons, an illusion of sense.

It is curious to observe in this connection that the poet who was careless about such particulars was fond of speculating in a spirit not unlike that of Sir Alfred Wallace, though with cruder information, on the larger aspects of astronomy. *The Last Man* is an instance in point, and in *The Pleasures of Hope* he had already anticipated the thought which was so much admired when propounded by Dr. Chalmers in his

Astronomical Lectures, that the centre of the visible universe, round which even the fixed stars revolve, may be the throne of God (Part II. lines 806-809).

Campbell's scheme of colours is almost as limited as Homer's. Having no single epithet for the iridescence of the rainbow, he contents himself with speaking of "its yellow lustre." But in spite of these and other blemishes which his most careful elaboration did not remove, the genuine poetic quality of Campbell's best productions is unquestionably of a high order. As Mr. Allingham, himself a neglected poet, has observed, "the rhythm carries one forward like the springy movement of a good horse."

"Compared as lyrical writers," says the same critic, "Campbell seems to me to have a finer touch than Scott or Byron, the former of whom is apt to be rough, the latter turgid."

The true lyric note is hard to analyse. It depends not on any rules of art prescribing the medium of expression, but on the intensity and purity of the glow which radiates directly from the core, and which superficial unevennesses cannot obscure. Every candid reader must acknowledge that in these poems some of the truest and most generous of human feelings often find their noblest expression. And though complex harmonies are rarely found in them, the melody is sufficiently varied to please the most fastidious ear. Campbell had acquired a very high degree of metrical skill. How admirably adapted to the subject, for example, is the metre of the lines *On the Camp Hill near Hastings*. One seems to hear the harpings of the Norman minstrels themselves as they touch the lyre in confidence of victory. And, to speak on a point of far less moment, his facility in rhyming appears in his frequent preference for double endings, so rare in English, which add grace and lightness to

many of his songs. If he allowed himself some latitude in this respect, it is not more than was permitted to many of our best poets before Tennyson. Some one has objected to "childhood" rhyming to "wildwood"; but what then of Shelley's "accept not"—"reject not," in one of the most exquisite of his shorter pieces?

It is with some reluctance that *Theodric* has been excluded from the present volume. It disappointed Campbell's admirers, who looked for something different from the Bard of Hope; but Campbell, although little influenced by contemporary fashions in verse, was well aware, after his wide survey of English poetry, that the heroic couplet admits of various uses, and he had deliberately set his "domestic tale" in a calmer key. A brief quotation may indicate the nature of the style:—

> "Ev'n when her light forsook him, it bequeathed
> Ennobling sorrow: and her memory breathed
> A sweetness that survived her living days,
> As odorous scents outlast the censer's blaze."

But the story is ineffectually told. There is no proper climax, and the reader has not been sufficiently interested in Constance. There is a distraction of sympathy, and the hero is a man of straw. Campbell might well write to Sir Walter Scott, "I am a dead bad hand at narrative." Even in *Gertrude*, in spite of Jeffrey's warning, the parting of the child lovers is not mentioned until Waldegrave's return. *Theodric* was produced under the stress of deep personal anxiety, which took the heart out of it, and, notwithstanding many beauties of expression, the author was not justified in hoping that it would live.

The case is still worse with *The Pilgrim of Glencoe*. This poet was out of his element in attempting realism. Although the characters of the hospitable but fierce old

Jacobite, of his thoughtful son, and of the veteran pensioner are graphically enough given, and the author shows intimate knowledge of the Highland character, yet, when we are forced to smile at the apoplectic stroke which saves the situation, we are aware that all poetic atmosphere is vanished. Such comic disillusionment belongs to prose.

The Ode to the Memory of Burns has been included, but with some hesitation. It was written, no doubt in haste, for an anniversary; but although it has some fine stanzas, and the noble line which calls the muse of Bannockburn

"A sunburst in the storm of death,"

it scarcely does justice to Campbell's real enthusiasm for one whom he loved to call the "Scottish Shakespeare." Excepting the lines on Chaucer which appear among the latest poems, it is his only tribute in verse to a brother bard.

The arrangement here adopted is partly chronological; that is to say, the poems are grouped in successive periods. In attempting this the editor has been assisted by some notes in the poet's handwriting on the margin of the contents of the edition of 1837, giving the dates and in some instances the places of production. These notes for the most part are in agreement with Dr. Beattie, who seems to have used them. But some caution here is necessary; for, as is obvious in the case of *The Battle of the Baltic* and *The Soldier's Dream*, a poem of Campbell's often existed in germ, or even in outline, for years before it saw the light of day. A striking instance of this habit is afforded by *The Last Man*. It was published in the *New Monthly Magazine* for 1824, and is referred by the poet himself to 1823. It has been

plausibly said to reflect some of the sad experiences of that and the preceding period; yet it is evident that the plan of the poem and many of its leading thoughts had been in the poet's mind for at least ten years. After its publication he was reminded that in Byron's poem of *Darkness* some of the same ideas and images had been expressed, and he had a horror of plagiarism; but on reflection he recalled the fact that in a conversation with Lord Byron he had put forth these very conceptions. This must have been previous to 1816, the year of Byron's departure from England; and in 1813 there took place an interview with Sir William Herschel which formed an epoch in Campbell's life. He asked Sir William, whom he had celebrated as having "yielded the lyre of Heaven another string," and who had "looked further into space than any other man," whether La Place was justified in asserting the stability of the Solar System. Sir William answered, "No; for the Asteroids are fragments of an exploded planet, and that may have been the beginning of the end." The effect of such a statement on the poet's vivid imagination may well be conceived.

The poem was much admired by our fathers, not merely as a *tour de force*, but for the human feeling which pervades it. The pathetic view of life and the stoical ending repeat in deeper tones, and with a larger intention, the "sorrowful mood" in which long since he had mused on the lost home of his ancestors.

The general consideration here advanced has led me to group the poems produced in middle life—between the publication of *O'Connor's Child* and the edition of 1837—with some regard to the nature and subject of each poem. Thus the main sections are:—

1. The earliest poems, produced before *The Pleasures of Hope*.

2. *The Pleasures of Hope.*
3. Poems of 1800 to 1808.
4. *Gertrude of Wyoming.*
5. *O'Connor's Child.*
6. Poems of 1809 to 1836, consisting of
   (*a*) Lyrics.
   (*b*) Ballads and Romances.
   (*c*) Translations from the Greek.
   (*d*) Poems in Blank Verse.
   (*e*) In the Cause of Freedom.
   (*f*) Occasional and Personal.
   (*g*) Lighter Lyrics. (The genius that soared could "stoop upon the wing.")
7. Latest Poems, 1837 to 1841.

By grouping together the poems *In the Cause of Freedom*, Campbell's lifelong persistence in his passionate devotion to Liberty is made conspicuous.

In revising the text the editor has availed himself of the following editions :—

1. The quarto of 1809 (published for the author by Longmans, etc., and dedicated to Lord Holland), containing *Gertrude of Wyoming; Ye Mariners of England, A Naval Ode; Glenara; The Battle of the Baltic; Lochiel's Warning; Hohenlinden*, and *Lord Ullin's Daughter*.

2. The edition of 1830 (Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley). One poem is printed from this edition only, viz. *Lines to Edward Lytton Bulwer on the Birth of his Child.*

3. The poet's final edition of 1843 (Moxon).

Mr. F. G. Kenyon of the British Museum has kindly examined for me the first edition of *O'Connor's Child* (1810), containing also some minor poems, of which the little song, *My Mind is my Kingdom*, here given amongst the "Lighter Lyrics," was never republished by the poet. A copy of the first edition of *The Pleasures of*

Hope in the Edinburgh Advocates' Library was in 1901 compared with the edition of 1830 by my late lamented friend, Mr. John Scott of Halkshill.

Some places in which an earlier reading has been restored are mentioned in the notes. The most important are (1) in *The Battle of the Baltic*, "our captains cried," where the later editions have "captain"; (2) in *Reullura*, "millstone crushes the grain" is preferred to "millstones crush," as better both in sense and metre; (3) in two places an obvious clerical error has been corrected—in *The Ode to Winter*, where Mr. Webb's emendation "lend" for "lead" is obviously right, and in *Gertrude*, where the printers, by reading "heard and seen" instead of "seen and heard," have destroyed the rhyme. Some of the author's alterations, especially in *Lochiël*, are familiarly known; others which appear significant are (1) in *The Mariners*, "her march is on the mountain waves" (ed. 1809), where "on" is changed to "o'er" in 1830 and later editions; (2) in *Gertrude*, Part II., stanza xi., where "palm-tree" (edd. 1809, 1830) has been changed to "pine-tree"—a concession to natural history; (3) in *Men of England*, "patriotism" (ed. 1830) is changed to "freedom" for the sake of metre, but with loss of force; (4) in *Lines on leaving a Scene in Bavaria*, "misfortune" is changed to "the friendless," showing that the poet had become conscious of an excessive tendency to personify abstractions. The punctuation, not a strong feature in Campbell, has been altered here and there where the meaning seemed to require it.

I have been entrusted by Mr. Lionel Furneaux Hill with a note-book which belonged to the poet's niece, Mary Campbell. This has enabled me to correct the first line of *Moonlight* from the author's MS. draft, and to insert amongst the latest poems some additional lines to the *Child-Sweetheart*, also in Campbell's own hand-

writing, which have at least the interest attaching to an unpublished piece.

The frontispiece is a photogravure from a portrait in oils, attributed to Sir David Wilkie. If the attribution is correct, it must have been painted in 1802, when Wilkie was a young art student, and Campbell was still in Edinburgh (*æt.* twenty-four). The picture is in the collection of Mrs. James Keyden, of 1 Claremont Terrace, Glasgow, to whom best thanks are due.

The editor has also to acknowledge the courtesy of Mr. J. Murray and of Mr. Henry Newbolt in allowing him to repeat the substance of an article which appeared in the *New Monthly* for February 1903, and the kindness of several surviving relatives of the poet, especially of Mr. L. F. Hill (son of the Aldine editor), and Mrs. Archibald Campbell of Brighton, who have supplied valuable documents and information.

EARLY POEMS

TRANSLATION FROM EURIPIDES

MEDEA, LINES 190-203

TELL me, ye bards, whose skill sublime
First charm'd the ear of youthful Time
With numbers wrapt in heavenly fire,
Who bade delighted Echo swell
The trembling transports of the lyre,
The murmur of the shell—
Why to the burst of joy alone
Accords sweet Music's soothing tone?
Why can no bard, with magic strain,
In slumbers steep the heart of pain?
While varied tones obey your sweep,
The mild, the plaintive, and the deep,
Bends not despairing Grief to hear
Your golden lute with ravish'd ear?
Has all your art no power to bind
The fiercer pangs that shake the mind,
And lull the wrath at whose command
Murder bares her gory hand?
When, flush'd with joy, the rosy throng
Weave the light dance, ye swell the song!
Cease, ye vain warblers! cease to charm!
The breast with other raptures warm!
Cease! till your hand with magic strain
In slumbers steep the heart of pain!

1795.

FROM THE SAME TRAGEDY

PARAPHRASE OF LINES 824-845

O HAGGARD queen! to Athens dost thou guide
Thy glowing chariot, steep'd in kindred gore;
Or seek to hide thy foul infanticide
Where Peace and Mercy dwell for evermore?

The land where Truth, pure, precious, and sublime,
Woos the deep silence of sequester'd bowers,
And warriors, matchless since the first of time,
Rear their bright banners o'er unconquer'd towers!

Where joyous youth, to Music's mellow strain,
Twines in the dance with nymphs for ever fair,
While Spring eternal on the lilied plain
Waves amber radiance through the fields of air!

The tuneful Nine (so sacred legends tell)
First waked their heavenly lyre these scenes among;
Still in your greenwood bowers they love to dwell;
Still in your vales they swell the choral song!

But there the tuneful, chaste, Pierian fair,
The guardian nymphs of green Parnassus, now
Sprung from Harmonia, while her graceful hair
Waved in high auburn o'er her polish'd brow!

Where silent vales, and glades of green array,
The murmuring wreaths of cool Cephisus lave,
There, as the muse hath sung, at noon of day,
The Queen of Beauty bow'd to taste the wave;

And bless'd the stream, and breathed across the land
The soft sweet gale that fans yon summer bowers;
And there the sister Loves, a smiling band,
Crown'd with the fragrant wreaths of rosy flowers!

"And go," she cries, "in yonder valleys rove,
With Beauty's torch the solemn scenes illume;
Wake in each eye the radiant light of Love,
Breathe on each cheek young Passion's tender bloom!

Entwine, with myrtle chains, your soft controul,
To sway the hearts of Freedom's darling kind!
With glowing charms enrapture Wisdom's soul,
And mould to grace ethereal Virtue's mind."

1796.

LOVE AND MADNESS

AN ELEGY

HARK! from the battlements of yonder tower
The solemn bell has toll'd the midnight hour!
Roused from drear visions of distemper'd sleep,
Poor Broderick wakes—in solitude to weep!

"Cease, Memory, cease (the friendless mourner cried)
To probe the bosom too severely tried!
Oh! ever cease, my pensive thoughts, to stray
Through the bright fields of Fortune's better day,
When youthful HOPE, the music of the mind,
Tuned all its charms, and Errington was kind!

Yet, can I cease, while glows this trembling frame,
In sighs to speak thy melancholy name?
I hear thy spirit wail in every storm!
In midnight shades I view thy passing form!
Pale as in that sad hour when doom'd to feel,
Deep in thy perjured heart, the bloody steel!

Demons of Vengeance! ye at whose command
I grasp'd the sword with more than woman's hand,
Say ye, did Pity's trembling voice controul,
Or horror damp the purpose of my soul?
No! my wild heart sat smiling o'er the plan,
Till Hate fulfill'd what baffled Love began!

Yes; let the clay-cold breast that never knew
One tender pang to generous Nature true,
Half-mingling pity with the gall of scorn,
Condemn this heart, that bled in love forlorn!

And ye, proud fair, whose soul no gladness warms,
Save Rapture's homage to your conscious charms!
Delighted idols of a gaudy train,
Ill can your blunter feelings guess the pain,
When the fond faithful heart, inspired to prove
Friendship refined, the calm delight of Love,
Feels all its tender strings with anguish torn,
And bleeds at perjured Pride's inhuman scorn.

Say, then, did pitying Heaven condemn the deed,
When Vengeance bade thee, faithless lover! bleed?
Long had I watch'd thy dark foreboding brow,
What time thy bosom scorn'd its dearest vow!
Sad though I wept the friend, the lover changed,
Still thy cold look was scornful and estranged,
Till from thy pity, love, and shelter thrown,
I wander'd hopeless, friendless, and alone!

Oh ! righteous Heaven ! 'twas then my tortured soul
First gave to wrath unlimited controul !
Adieu the silent look ! the streaming eye !
The murmur'd plaint ! the deep heart-heaving sigh !
Long-slumbering Vengeance wakes to better deeds ;
He shrieks, he falls, the perjured lover bleeds !
Now the last laugh of agony is o'er,
And pale in blood he sleeps, to wake no more !

'Tis done ! the flame of hate no longer burns :
Nature relents, but, ah ! too late returns !
Why does my soul this gush of fondness feel ?
Trembling and faint, I drop the guilty steel !
Cold on my heart the hand of terror lies,
And shades of horror close my languid eyes !

Oh ! 'twas a deed of Murder's deepest grain !
Could Broderick's soul so true to wrath remain ?
A friend long true, a once fond lover fell !—
Where Love was foster'd could not Pity dwell ?

Unhappy youth ! while yon pale crescent glows
To watch o'er silent Nature's deep repose,
Thy sleepless spirit, breathing from the tomb,
Foretells my fate, and summons me to come !
Once more I see thy sheeted spectre stand,
Roll the dim eye, and wave the paly hand !

Soon may this fluttering spark of vital flame
Forsake its languid melancholy frame !
Soon may these eyes their trembling lustre close,
Welcome the dreamless night of long repose !
Soon may this woe-worn spirit seek the bourne
Where, lull'd to slumber, Grief forgets to mourn ! "

1795.

THE HARPER

On the green banks of Shannon, when Sheelah was nigh,
No blithe Irish lad was so happy as I;
No harp like my own could so cheerily play,
And wherever I went was my poor dog Tray.

When at last I was forced from my Sheelah to part,
She said, (while the sorrow was big at her heart),
Oh! remember your Sheelah, when far, far away:
And be kind, my dear Pat, to our poor dog Tray.

Poor dog! he was faithful and kind, to be sure,
And he constantly loved me, although I was poor;
When the sour-looking folks sent me heartless away,
I had always a friend in my poor dog Tray.

When the road was so dark, and the night was so cold,
And Pat and his dog were grown weary and old,
How snugly we slept in my old coat of grey,
And he lick'd me for kindness—my poor dog Tray.

Though my wallet was scant, I remember'd his case,
Nor refused my last crust to his pitiful face;
But he died at my feet on a cold winter day,
And I play'd a sad lament for my poor dog Tray.

Where now shall I go, poor, forsaken, and blind?
Can I find one to guide me, so faithful and kind?
To my sweet native village, so far, far away,
I can never more return with my poor dog Tray.

1796.

THE WOUNDED HUSSAR

ALONE to the banks of the dark-rolling Danube
Fair Adelaide hied when the battle was o'er :—
"Oh whither," she cried, "hast thou wander'd, my lover,
Or here dost thou welter and bleed on the shore?

What voice did I hear? 'twas my Henry that sigh'd!"
All mournful she hasten'd; nor wander'd she far,
When bleeding, and low, on the heath she descried,
By the light of the moon, her poor wounded Hussar!

From his bosom that heaved the last torrent was streaming,
And pale was his visage, deep mark'd with a scar!
And dim was that eye, once expressively beaming,
That melted in love and that kindled in war!

How smit was poor Adelaide's heart at the sight!
How bitter she wept o'er the victim of war!
"Hast thou come, my fond Love, this last sorrowful night,
To cheer the lone heart of your wounded Hussar?"

"Thou shalt live," she replied; "Heaven's mercy relieving
Each anguishing wound shall forbid me to mourn!"
"Ah no! the last pang of my bosom is heaving!
No light of the morn shall to Henry return!

Thou charmer of life, ever tender and true!
Ye babes of my love, that await me afar!"
His faltering tongue scarce could murmur adieu,
When he sunk in her arms—the poor wounded Hussar!

1796.

GILDEROY

THE last, the fatal hour is come,
That bears my love from me:
I hear the dead note of the drum,
I mark the gallows' tree!

The bell has toll'd; it shakes my heart;
The trumpet speaks thy name;
And must my Gilderoy depart
To bear a death of shame?

No bosom trembles for thy doom;
No mourner wipes a tear;
The gallows' foot is all thy tomb,
The sledge is all thy bier.

Oh, Gilderoy! bethought we then
So soon, so sad to part,
When first in Roslin's lovely glen
You triumph'd o'er my heart?

Your locks they glitter'd to the sheen,
Your hunter garb was trim;
And graceful was the ribbon green
That bound your manly limb!

Ah! little thought I to deplore
Those limbs in fetters bound;
Or hear, upon the scaffold floor,
The midnight hammer sound.

Ye cruel, cruel, that combined
The guiltless to pursue;
My Gilderoy was ever kind,
He could not injure you!

A long adieu! but where shall fly
  Thy widow all forlorn,
When every mean and cruel eye
  Regards my woe with scorn?

Yes! they will mock thy widow's tears,
  And hate thine orphan boy;
Alas! his infant beauty wears
  The form of Gilderoy.

Then will I seek the dreary mound
  That wraps thy mouldering clay,
And weep and linger on the ground,
  And sigh my heart away.

1798.

THE PLEASURES OF HOPE

THE PLEASURES OF HOPE

PART THE FIRST

ANALYSIS

THE poem opens with a comparison between the beauty of remote objects in a landscape, and those ideal scenes of felicity which the imagination delights to contemplate—the influence of anticipation upon the other passions is next delineated—an allusion is made to the well-known fiction in Pagan tradition, that, when all the guardian deities of mankind abandoned the world, Hope alone was left behind —the consolations of this passion in situations of danger and distress —the seaman on his watch—the soldier marching into battle—allusion to the interesting adventures of Byron.

The inspiration of Hope, as it actuates the efforts of genius, whether in the department of science, or of taste—domestic felicity, how intimately connected with views of future happiness—picture of a mother watching her infant when asleep—pictures of the prisoner, the maniac, and the wanderer.

From the consolations of individual misery a transition is made to prospects of political improvement in the future state of society—the wide field that is yet open for the progress of humanising arts among uncivilised nations—from these views of amelioration of society, and the extension of liberty and truth over despotic and barbarous countries, by a melancholy contrast of ideas, we are led to reflect upon the hard fate of a brave people recently conspicuous in their struggles for independence—description of the capture of Warsaw, of the last contest of the oppressors and the oppressed, and the massacre of the Polish patriots at the bridge of Prague—apostrophe to the self-interested enemies of human improvement—the wrongs of Africa—the barbarous policy of Europeans in India

—prophecy in the Hindoo mythology of the expected descent of the Deity to redress the miseries of their race, and to take vengeance on the violators of justice and mercy.

At summer eve, when Heaven's ethereal bow
Spans with bright arch the glittering hills below
Why to yon mountain turns the musing eye,
Whose sunbright summit mingles with the sky?
Why do those cliffs of shadowy tint appear
More sweet than all the landscape smiling near?—
'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view,
And robes the mountain in its azure hue.
Thus, with delight, we linger to survey
The promised joys of life's unmeasured way;
Thus, from afar, each dim-discover'd scene
More pleasing seems than all the past hath been,
And every form, that Fancy can repair
From dark oblivion, glows divinely there.
What potent spirit guides the raptured eye
To pierce the shades of dim futurity?
Can Wisdom lend, with all her heavenly power,
The pledge of Joy's anticipated hour?
Ah, no! she darkly sees the fate of man—
Her dim horizon bounded to a span;
Or, if she hold an image to the view,
'Tis Nature pictured too severely true.
With thee, sweet Hope! resides the heavenly light,
That pours remotest rapture on the sight:
Thine is the charm of life's bewilder'd way,
That calls each slumbering passion into play.
Waked by thy touch, I see the sister-band,
On tiptoe watching, start at thy command,
And fly where'er thy mandate bids them steer,
To Pleasure's path, or Glory's bright career.
Primeval Hope, the Aönian Muses say,
When Man and Nature mourn'd their first decay:

When every form of death, and every woe,
Shot from malignant stars to earth below;
When Murder bared her arm, and rampant War
Yoked the red dragons of her iron car;
When Peace and Mercy, banish'd from the plain,
Sprung on the viewless winds to Heaven again;
All, all forsook the friendless, guilty mind,
But HOPE, the charmer, linger'd still behind.
Thus, while Elijah's burning wheels prepare
From Carmel's heights to sweep the fields of air,
The prophet's mantle, ere his flight began,
Dropt on the world—a sacred gift to man.

Auspicious HOPE! in thy sweet garden grow
Wreaths for each toil, a charm for every woe;
Won by their sweets, in Nature's languid hour,
The way-worn pilgrim seeks thy summer bower;
There, as the wild bee murmurs on the wing,
What peaceful dreams thy handmaid spirits bring!
What viewless forms th' Æolian organ play,
And sweep the furrow'd lines of anxious thought away.
Angel of life! thy glittering wings explore
Earth's loneliest bounds, and Ocean's wildest shore.
Lo! to the wintry winds the pilot yields
His bark careering o'er unfathom'd fields;
Now on Atlantic waves he rides afar,
Where Andes, giant of the western star,
With meteor-standard to the winds unfurl'd,
Looks from his throne of clouds o'er half the world!
Now far he sweeps, where scarce a summer smiles,
On Behring's rocks, or Greenland's naked isles:
Cold on his midnight watch the breezes blow,
From wastes that slumber in eternal snow;
And waft, across the waves' tumultuous roar,
The wolf's long howl from Oonalaska's shore.

Poor child of danger, nursling of the storm,
Sad are the woes that wreck thy manly form!
Rocks, waves, and winds, the shatter'd bark delay;
Thy heart is sad, thy home is far away.
But HOPE can here her moonlight vigils keep,
And sing to charm the spirit of the deep:
Swift as yon streamer lights the starry pole,
Her visions warm the watchman's pensive soul;
His native hills that rise in happier climes,
The grot that heard his song of other times,
His cottage home, his bark of slender sail,
His glassy lake, and broomwood-blossom'd vale,
Rush on his thought; he sweeps before the wind,
Treads the loved shore he sigh'd to leave behind;
Meets at each step a friend's familiar face,
And flies at last to Helen's long embrace;
Wipes from her cheek the rapture-speaking tear!
And clasps, with many a sigh, his children dear!
While, long neglected, but at length caress'd,
His faithful dog salutes the smiling guest,
Points to the master's eyes (where'er they roam)
His wistful face, and whines a welcome home.
Friend of the brave! in peril's darkest hour,
Intrepid Virtue looks to thee for power;
To thee the heart its trembling homage yields,
On stormy floods, and carnage-cover'd fields,
When front to front the banner'd hosts combine,
Halt ere they close, and form the dreadful line.
When all is still on Death's devoted soil,
The march-worn soldier mingles for the toil;
As rings his glittering tube, he lifts on high
The dauntless brow, and spirit-speaking eye,
Hails in his heart the triumph yet to come,
And hears thy stormy music in the drum!
And such thy strength-inspiring aid that bore

The hardy Byron to his native shore—
In horrid climes, where Chiloe's tempests sweep
Tumultuous murmurs o'er the troubled deep,
'Twas his to mourn Misfortune's rudest shock,
Scourged by the winds, and cradled on the rock,
To wake each joyless morn and search again
The famish'd haunts of solitary men;
Whose race, unyielding as their native storm,
Know not a trace of Nature but the form;
Yet, at thy call, the hardy tar pursued,
Pale, but intrepid, sad, but unsubdued,
Pierced the deep woods, and hailing from afar
The moon's pale planet and the northern star,
Paused at each dreary cry unheard before,
Hyænas in the wild, and mermaids on the shore;
Till, led by thee o'er many a cliff sublime,
He found a warmer world, a milder clime,
A home to rest, a shelter to defend,
Peace and repose, a Briton and a friend!

Congenial HOPE! thy passion-kindling power,
How bright, how strong, in youth's untroubled hour!
On yon proud height, with Genius hand-in-hand,
I see thee light, and wave thy golden wand.
"Go, child of Heaven!" (thy winged words proclaim)
"'Tis thine to search the boundless fields of fame!
Lo! Newton, priest of Nature, shines afar,
Scans the wide world, and numbers every star!
Wilt thou, with him, mysterious rites apply,
And watch the shrine with wonder-beaming eye?
Yes, thou shalt mark, with magic art profound,
The speed of light, the circling march of sound;
With Franklin grasp the lightning's fiery wing,
Or yield the lyre of Heaven another string.
"The Swedish sage admires, in yonder bowers,

His winged insects, and his rosy flowers ;
Calls from their woodland haunts the savage train,
With sounding horn, and counts them on the plain—
So once, at Heaven's command, the wanderers came
To Eden's shade, and heard their various name.

"Far from the world, in yon sequester'd clime,
Slow pass the sons of Wisdom, more sublime ;
Calm as the fields of Heaven, his sapient eye
The loved Athenian lifts to realms on high,
Admiring Plato, on his spotless page,
Stamps the bright dictates of the Father sage :
'Shall Nature bound to Earth's diurnal span
The fire of God, th' immortal soul of man?'

"Turn, child of Heaven, thy rapture-lighten'd eye
To Wisdom's walks ; the sacred Nine are nigh :
Hark ! from bright spires that gild the Delphian height,
From streams that wander in eternal light,
Ranged on their hill, Harmonia's daughters swell
The mingling tones of horn, and harp, and shell ;
Deep from his vaults the Loxian murmurs flow,
And Pythia's awful organ peals below.

"Beloved of Heaven ! the smiling Muse shall shed
Her moonlight halo on thy beauteous head ;
Shall swell thy heart to rapture unconfined,
And breathe a holy madness o'er thy mind.
I see thee roam her guardian power beneath,
And talk with spirits on the midnight heath ;
Enquire of guilty wanderers whence they came,
And ask each blood-stain'd form his earthly name ;
Then weave in rapid verse the deeds they tell,
And read the trembling world the tales of hell.

"When Venus, throned in clouds of rosy hue,
Flings from her golden urn the vesper dew,
And bids fond man her glimmering noon employ,
Sacred to love, and walks of tender joy ;

A milder mood the goddess shall recall,
And soft as dew thy tones of music fall;
While Beauty's deeply-pictured smiles impart
A pang more dear than pleasure to the heart—
Warm as thy sighs shall flow the Lesbian strain,
And plead in Beauty's ear, nor plead in vain.
"Or wilt thou Orphean hymns more sacred deem,
And steep thy song in Mercy's mellow stream;
To pensive drops the radiant eye beguile—
For Beauty's tears are lovelier than her smile;—
On Nature's throbbing anguish pour relief,
And teach impassion'd souls the joy of grief?
"Yes; to thy tongue shall seraph words be given,
And power on earth to plead the cause of Heaven;
The proud, the cold untroubled heart of stone,
That never mused on sorrow but its own,
Unlocks a generous store at thy command,
Like Horeb's rocks beneath the prophet's hand.
The living lumber of his kindred earth,
Charm'd into soul, receives a second birth,
Feels thy dread power another heart afford,
Whose passion-touch'd harmonious strings accord
True as the circling spheres to Nature's plan;
And man, the brother, lives the friend of man.
"Bright as the pillar rose at Heaven's command,
When Israel march'd along the desert land,
Blazed through the night on lonely wilds afar,
And told the path,—a never-setting star:
So, heavenly Genius, in thy course divine,
HOPE is thy star, her light is ever thine."

Propitious Power! when rankling cares annoy
The sacred home of Hymenean joy;
When doom'd to Poverty's sequester'd dell
The wedded pair of love and virtue dwell,

Unpitied by the world, unknown to fame,
Their woes, their wishes, and their hearts the same—
Oh, there, prophetic HOPE ! thy smile bestow,
And chase the pangs that worth should never know.—
There, as the parent deals his scanty store
To friendless babes, and weeps to give no more,
Tell, that his manly race shall yet assuage
Their father's wrongs, and shield his latter age.
What though for him no Hybla sweets distil,
Nor bloomy vines wave purple on the hill ;
Tell, that when silent years have pass'd away,
That when his eye grows dim, his tresses grey,
These busy hands a lovelier cot shall build,
And deck with fairer flowers his little field,
And call from Heaven propitious dews to breathe
Arcadian beauty on the barren heath ;
Tell, that while Love's spontaneous smile endears
The days of peace, the sabbath of his years,
Health shall prolong to many a festive hour
The social pleasures of his humble bower.

Lo ! at the couch where infant beauty sleeps,
Her silent watch the mournful mother keeps ;
She, while the lovely babe unconscious lies,
Smiles on her slumbering child with pensive eyes,
And weaves a song of melancholy joy—
" Sleep, image of thy father, sleep, my boy ;
No lingering hour of sorrow shall be thine ;
No sigh that rends thy father's heart and mine ;
Bright as his manly sire the son shall be
In form and soul ; but, ah ! more blest than he !
Thy fame, thy worth, thy filial love at last,
Shall soothe his aching heart for all the past—
With many a smile my solitude repay,
And chase the world's ungenerous scorn away.

" And say, when summon'd from the world and thee,

I lay my head beneath the willow tree,
Wilt *thou*, sweet mourner! at my stone appear,
And soothe my parted spirit lingering near?
Oh, wilt thou come at evening hour to shed,
The tears of Memory o'er my narrow bed;
With aching temples on thy hand reclined,
Muse on the last farewell I leave behind,
Breathe a deep sigh to winds that murmur low,
And think on all my love, and all my woe?"
So speaks affection, ere the infant eye
Can look regard, or brighten in reply;
But when the cherub lip hath learnt to claim
A mother's ear by that endearing name;
Soon as the playful innocent can prove
A tear of pity, or a smile of love,
Or cons his murmuring task beneath her care,
Or lisps with holy look his evening prayer,
Or gazing, mutely pensive, sits to hear
The mournful ballad warbled in his ear;
How fondly looks admiring HOPE the while,
At every artless tear, and every smile;
How glows the joyous parent to descry
A guileless bosom, true to sympathy!
Where is the troubled heart consign'd to share
Tumultuous toils, or solitary care,
Unblest by visionary thoughts that stray
To count the joys of Fortune's better day!
Lo! nature, life, and liberty relume
The dim-eyed tenant of the dungeon gloom,
A long-lost friend, or hapless child restored,
Smiles at his blazing hearth and social board;
Warm from his heart the tears of rapture flow,
And virtue triumphs o'er remember'd woe.
Chide not his peace, proud Reason! nor destroy
The shadowy forms of uncreated joy,

That urge the lingering tide of life, and pour
Spontaneous slumber on his midnight hour.
Hark! the wild maniac sings, to chide the gale
That wafts so slow her lover's distant sail;
She, sad spectatress, on the wintry shore,
Watch'd the rude surge his shroudless corse that bore,
Knew the pale form, and shrieking in amaze,
Clasp'd her cold hands, and fix'd her maddening gaze:
Poor widow'd wretch; 'twas there she wept in vain,
Till Memory fled her agonizing brain;—
But Mercy gave, to charm the sense of woe,
Ideal peace, that Truth could ne'er bestow;
Warm on her heart the joys of Fancy beam,
And aimless HOPE delights her darkest dream.
  Oft when yon moon has climb'd the midnight sky,
And the lone sea-bird wakes its wildest cry,
Piled on the steep, her blazing faggots burn
To hail the bark that never can return;
And still she waits, but scarce forbears to weep
That constant love can linger on the deep.
  And mark the wretch, whose wanderings never knew
The world's regard, that soothes, though half untrue;
Whose erring heart the lash of sorrow bore,
But found not pity when it err'd no more.
Yon friendless man, at whose dejected eye
Th' unfeeling proud one looks—and passes by,
Condemn'd on Penury's barren path to roam,
Scorn'd by the world, and left without a home—
Even he, at evening, should he chance to stray
Down by the hamlet's hawthorn-scented way,
Where round the cot's romantic glade are seen
The blossom'd bean-field, and the sloping green,
Leans o'er its humble gate, and thinks the while—
Oh! that for me some home like this would smile,
Some hamlet shade, to yield my sickly form

Health in the breeze, and shelter in the storm!
There should my hand no stinted boon assign
To wretched hearts with sorrow such as mine!—
That generous wish can soothe unpitied care,
And HOPE half mingles with the poor man's prayer.

HOPE! when I mourn, with sympathizing mind,
The wrongs of fate, the woes of human kind,
Thy blissful omens bid my spirit see
The boundless fields of rapture yet to be;
I watch the wheels of Nature's mazy plan,
And learn the future by the past of man.
Come, bright Improvement! on the car of Time,
And rule the spacious world from clime to clime!
Thy handmaid arts shall every wild explore,
Trace every wave, and culture every shore.
On Erie's banks, where tigers steal along,
And the dread Indian chants a dismal song,
Where human fiends on midnight errands walk,
And bathe in brains the murderous tomahawk,
There shall the flocks on thymy pasture stray,
And shepherds dance at Summer's opening day;
Each wandering genius of the lonely glen
Shall start to view the glittering haunts of men,
And silent watch, on woodland heights around,
The village curfew as it tolls profound.
In Libyan groves, where damned rites are done,
That bathe the rocks in blood, and veil the sun,
Truth shall arrest the murderous arm profane,
Wild Obi flies—the veil is rent in twain.
Where barbarous hordes on Scythian mountains roam,
Truth, Mercy, Freedom, yet shall find a home;
Where'er degraded Nature bleeds and pines,
From Guinea's coast to Sibir's dreary mines,
Truth shall pervade th' unfathom'd darkness there,

And light the dreadful features of despair.—
Hark! the stern captive spurns his heavy load,
And asks the image back that Heaven bestow'd!
Fierce in his eye the fire of valour burns,
And as the slave departs, the man returns.

O sacred Truth! thy triumph ceased awhile,
And HOPE, thy sister, ceased with thee to smile,
When leagued Oppression pour'd to Northern wars
Her whisker'd pandoors and her fierce hussars,
Waved her dread standard to the breeze of morn,
Peal'd her loud drum, and twang'd her trumpet horn;
Tumultuous Horror brooded o'er her van,
Presaging wrath to Poland—and to man!
Warsaw's last champion from her height survey'd,
Wide o'er the fields, a waste of ruin laid,—
"O Heaven!" he cried, "my bleeding country save!—
Is there no hand on high to shield the brave?
Yet, though destruction sweep those lovely plains,
Rise, fellow-men! our country yet remains!
By that dread name, we wave the sword on high!
And swear for her to live!—with her to die!"
He said, and on the rampart-heights array'd
His trusty warriors, few, but undismay'd;
Firm-paced and slow, a horrid front they form,
Still as the breeze, but dreadful as the storm;
Low murmuring sounds along their banners fly,
Revenge, or death,—the watchword and reply;
Then peal'd the notes, omnipotent to charm,
And the loud tocsin toll'd their last alarm!—
In vain, alas! in vain, ye gallant few!
From rank to rank your volley'd thunder flew:—
Oh, bloodiest picture in the book of Time,
Sarmatia fell, unwept, without a crime;
Found not a generous friend, a pitying foe,

Strength in her arms, nor mercy in her woe!
Dropp'd from her nerveless grasp the shatter'd spear,
Closed her bright eye, and curb'd her high career;—
HOPE, for a season, bade the world farewell,
And Freedom shriek'd—as KOSCIUSKO fell!

The sun went down, nor ceased the carnage there,
Tumultuous Murder shook the midnight air—
On Prague's proud arch the fires of ruin glow,
His blood-dyed waters murmuring far below;
The storm prevails, the rampart yields a way,
Bursts the wild cry of horror and dismay!
Hark, as the smouldering piles with thunder fall,
A thousand shrieks for hopeless mercy call!
Earth shook—red meteors flash'd along the sky,
And conscious Nature shudder'd at the cry!

Oh! righteous Heaven; ere Freedom found a grave,
Why slept the sword, omnipotent to save?
Where was thine arm, O Vengeance! where thy rod,
That smote the foes of Zion and of God;
That crush'd proud Ammon, when his iron car
Was yoked in wrath, and thunder'd from afar?
Where was the storm that slumber'd till the host
Of blood-stain'd Pharaoh left their trembling coast:
Then bade the deep in wild commotion flow,
And heaved an ocean on their march below?

Departed spirits of the mighty dead!
Ye that at Marathon and Leuctra bled!
Friends of the world! restore your swords to man,
Fight in his sacred cause, and lead the van!
Yet for Sarmatia's tears of blood atone,
And make her arm puissant as your own!
Oh! once again to Freedom's cause return
The patriot TELL—the BRUCE OF BANNOCKBURN!

Yes! thy proud lords, unpitied land! shall see
That man hath yet a soul—and dare be free!

A little while, along thy saddening plains,
The starless night of Desolation reigns ;
Truth shall restore the light by Nature given,
And, like Prometheus, bring the fire of Heaven !
Prone to the dust Oppression shall be hurl'd,
Her name, her nature, wither'd from the world !
  Ye that the rising morn invidious mark,
And hate the light—because your deeds are dark ;
Ye that expanding truth invidious view,
And think, or wish, the song of HOPE untrue ;
Perhaps your little hands presume to span
The march of Genius and the powers of man ;
Perhaps ye watch, at Pride's unhallow'd shrine,
Her victims, newly slain, and thus divine :—
"Here shall thy triumph, Genius, cease, and here
Truth, Science, Virtue, close your short career."
  Tyrants ! in vain ye trace the wizard ring ;
In vain ye limit Mind's unwearied spring :
What ! can ye lull the winged winds asleep,
Arrest the rolling world, or chain the deep ?
No !—the wild wave contemns your sceptred hand :
It roll'd not back when Canute gave command !

  Man ! can thy doom no brighter soul allow ?
Still must thou live a blot on Nature's brow ?
Shall War's polluted banner ne'er be furl'd ?
Shall crimes and tyrants cease but with the world ?
What ! are thy triumphs, sacred Truth, belied ?
Why then hath Plato lived—or Sidney died ?—
  Ye fond adorers of departed fame,
Who warm at Scipio's worth, or Tully's name !
Ye that, in fancied vision, can admire
The sword of Brutus, and the Theban lyre !
Rapt in historic ardour, who adore
Each classic haunt, and well-remember'd shore,

Where Valour tuned, amidst her chosen throng,
The Thracian trumpet, and the Spartan song;
Or, wandering thence, behold the later charms
Of England's glory, and Helvetia's arms!
See Roman fire in Hampden's bosom swell,
And fate and freedom in the shaft of Tell!
Say, ye fond zealots to the worth of yore,
Hath valour left the world—to live no more?
No more shall Brutus bid a tyrant die,
And sternly smile with vengeance in his eye?
Hampden no more, when suffering Freedom calls,
Encounter Fate, and triumph as he falls?
Nor Tell disclose, through peril and alarm,
The might that slumbers in a peasant's arm?
  Yes! in that generous cause, for ever strong,
The patriot's virtue and the poet's song
Still, as the tide of ages rolls away,
Shall charm the world, unconscious of decay!
  Yes! there are hearts, prophetic HOPE may trust,
That slumber yet in uncreated dust,
Ordain'd to fire th' adoring sons of earth
With every charm of wisdom and of worth;
Ordain'd to light, with intellectual day,
The mazy wheels of Nature as they play,
Or, warm with Fancy's energy, to glow,
And rival all but Shakespeare's name below.
  And say, supernal Powers! who deeply scan
Heaven's dark decrees, unfathom'd yet by man,
When shall the world call down, to cleanse her shame,
That embryo spirit, yet without a name,—
That friend of Nature, whose avenging hands
Shall burst the Libyan's adamantine bands?
Who, sternly marking on his native soil
The blood, the tears, the anguish, and the toil,
Shall bid each righteous heart exult to see

Peace to the slave, and vengeance on the free!
Yet, yet, degraded men! th' expected day
That breaks your bitter cup, is far away;
Trade, wealth, and fashion, ask you still to bleed,
And holy men give Scripture for the deed;
Scourged, and debased, no Briton stoops to save
A wretch, a coward; yes, because a slave!—
Eternal Nature! when thy giant hand
Had heaved the floods, and fix'd the trembling land,
When life sprang startling at thy plastic call,
Endless her forms, and man the lord of all!
Say, was that lordly form inspired by thee,
To wear eternal chains and bow the knee?
Was man ordain'd the slave of man to toil,
Yoked with the brutes, and fetter'd to the soil;
Weigh'd in a tyrant's balance with his gold?
No!—Nature stamp'd us in a heavenly mould!
She bade no wretch his thankless labour urge,
Nor, trembling, take the pittance and the scourge!
No homeless Libyan, on the stormy deep,
To call upon his country's name, and weep!—
Lo! once in triumph, on his boundless plain,
The quiver'd chief of Congo loved to reign;
With fires proportion'd to his native sky,
Strength in his arm, and lightning in his eye;
Scour'd with wild feet his sun-illumined zone,
The spear, the lion, and the woods, his own!
Or led the combat, bold without a plan,
An artless savage, but a fearless man!
The plunderer came!—alas! no glory smiles
For Congo's chief on yonder Indian isles;
For ever fall'n! no son of Nature now,
With Freedom charter'd on his manly brow;
Faint, bleeding, bound, he weeps the night away,
And when the sea-wind wafts the dewless day,

Starts, with a bursting heart, for evermore
To curse the sun that lights their guilty shore!
The shrill horn blew; at that alarum knell
His guardian angel took a last farewell!
That funeral dirge to darkness hath resign'd
The fiery grandeur of a generous mind!
Poor fetter'd man! I hear thee whispering low
Unhallow'd vows to Guilt, the child of Woe,
Friendless thy heart; and canst thou harbour there
A wish but death—a passion but despair?
The widow'd Indian, when her lord expires,
Mounts the dread pile, and braves the funeral fires!
So falls the heart at Thraldom's bitter sigh!
So Virtue dies, the spouse of Liberty!

But not to Libya's barren climes alone,
To Chili, or the wild Siberian zone,
Belong the wretched heart and haggard eye,
Degraded worth, and poor misfortune's sigh!—
Ye orient realms, where Ganges' waters run!
Prolific fields! dominions of the sun!
How long your tribes have trembled and obey'd!
How long was Timour's iron sceptre sway'd,
Whose marshall'd hosts, the lions of the plain,
From Scythia's northern mountains to the main,
Raged o'er your plunder'd shrines and altars bare,
With blazing torch and gory scimitar,—
Stunn'd with the cries of death each gentle gale,
And bathed in blood the verdure of the vale!
Yet could no pangs the immortal spirit tame,
When Brama's children perish'd for his name;
The martyr smiled beneath avenging power,
And braved the tyrant in his torturing hour!
When Europe sought your subject realms to gain,
And stretch'd her giant sceptre o'er the main;

Taught her proud barks the winding way to shape,
And braved the stormy Spirit of the Cape:
Children of Brama! then was Mercy nigh
To wash the stain of blood's eternal dye?
Did Peace descend to triumph and to save,
When freeborn Britons cross'd the Indian wave?
Ah, no!—to more than Rome's ambition true,
The Nurse of Freedom gave it not to you!
She the bold route of Europe's guilt began,
And, in the march of nations, led the van!

Rich in the gems of India's gaudy zone,
And plunder piled from kingdoms not their own,
Degenerate trade! thy minions could despise
The heart-born anguish of a thousand cries;
Could lock, with impious hands, their teeming store,
While famish'd nations died along the shore:
Could mock the groans of fellow-men, and bear
The curse of kingdoms peopled with despair;
Could stamp disgrace on man's polluted name,
And barter, with their gold, eternal shame!

But hark! as bow'd to earth the Bramin kneels,
From heavenly climes propitious thunder peals!
Of India's fate her guardian spirits tell,
Prophetic murmurs breathing on the shell,
And solemn sounds, that awe the listening mind,
Roll on the azure paths of every wind.

"Foes of mankind!" (her guardian spirits say)
"Revolving ages bring the bitter day,
When Heaven's unerring arm shall fall on you,
And blood for blood these Indian plains bedew;
Nine times have Brama's wheels of lightning hurl'd
His awful presence o'er the alarmed world;
Nine times hath Guilt, through all his giant frame,
Convulsive trembled, as the Mighty came;
Nine times hath suffering Mercy spared in vain—

But Heaven shall burst her starry gates again!
He comes! dread Brama shakes the sunless sky
With murmuring wrath, and thunders from on high;
Heaven's fiery horse, beneath his warrior form,
Paws the light clouds and gallops on the storm!
Wide waves his flickering sword; his bright arms glow
Like summer suns, and light the world below!
Earth, and her trembling isles in Ocean's bed,
Are shook; and Nature rocks beneath his tread!
"To pour redress on India's injured realm,
The oppressor to dethrone, the proud to whelm;
To chase destruction from her plunder'd shore
With hearts and arms that triumph'd once before,
The tenth Avatar comes! at Heaven's command
Shall Seriswattee wave her hallow'd wand!
And Camdeo bright, and Ganesa sublime,
Shall bless with joy their own propitious clime!—
Come, Heavenly Powers! primeval peace restore!
Love!—Mercy!—Wisdom!—rule for evermore!"

PART THE SECOND

ANALYSIS

APOSTROPHE to the power of Love—its intimate connection with generous and social Sensibility—allusion to that beautiful passage in the beginning of the book of Genesis, which represents the happiness of Paradise itself incomplete, till love was superadded to its other blessings—the dreams of future felicity which a lively imagination is apt to cherish, when Hope is animated by refined attachment—this disposition to combine, in one imaginary scene of residence, all that is pleasing in our estimate of happiness, compared to the skill of the great artist who personified perfect beauty, in the picture of Venus, by an assemblage of the most beautiful features he could find—a summer and winter evening described, as they may be supposed to arise in the mind of one who wishes, with enthusiasm, for the union of friendship and retirement.

Hope and Imagination inseparable agents—even in those contem-

plative moments when our imagination wanders beyond the boundaries of this world, our minds are not unattended with an impression that we shall some day have a wider and more distinct prospect of the universe, instead of the partial glimpse we now enjoy.

The last and most sublime influence of Hope is the concluding topic of the poem—the predominance of a belief in a future state over the terrors attendant on dissolution—the baneful influence of that sceptical philosophy which bars us from such comforts—allusion to the fate of a suicide—episode of Conrad and Ellenore—conclusion.

In joyous youth, what soul hath never known
Thought, feeling, taste, harmonious to its own?
Who hath not paused while Beauty's pensive eye
Ask'd from his heart the homage of a sigh?
Who hath not own'd, with rapture-smitten frame,
The power of grace, the magic of a name?
  There be, perhaps, who barren hearts avow,
Cold as the rocks on Torneo's hoary brow;
There be, whose loveless wisdom never fail'd,
In self-adoring pride securely mail'd:—
But triumph not, ye peace-enamour'd few!
Fire, Nature, Genius, never dwelt with you!
For you no fancy consecrates the scene
Where rapture utter'd vows, and wept between,
'Tis yours, unmoved, to sever and to meet;
No pledge is sacred, and no home is sweet!
  Who that would ask a heart to dulness wed,
The waveless calm, the slumber of the dead?
No; the wild bliss of Nature needs alloy,
And fear and sorrow fan the fire of joy!
And say, without our hopes, without our fears,
Without the home that plighted love endears,
Without the smile from partial beauty won,
Oh! what were man?—a world without a sun.
  Till Hymen brought his love-delighted hour,
There dwelt no joy in Eden's rosy bower!
In vain the viewless seraph lingering there

At starry midnight charm'd the silent air ;
In vain the wild bird caroll'd on the steep,
To hail the sun, slow wheeling from the deep ;
In vain, to soothe the solitary shade,
Aërial notes in mingling measure play'd ;
The summer wind that shook the spangled tree,
The whispering wave, the murmur of the bee ;—
Still slowly pass'd the melancholy day,
And still the stranger wist not where to stray.
The world was sad !—the garden was a wild !
And man, the hermit, sigh'd—till woman smiled !

True, the sad power to generous hearts may bring
Delirious anguish on his fiery wing ;
Barr'd from delight by Fate's untimely hand,
By wealthless lot, or pitiless command ;
Or doom'd to gaze on beauties that adorn
The smile of triumph or the frown of scorn ;
While Memory watches o'er the sad review
Of joys that faded like the morning dew ;
Peace may depart—and life and nature seem
A barren path, a wildness, and a dream !

But can the noble mind for ever brood,
The willing victim of a weary mood,
On heartless cares that squander life away,
And cloud young Genius brightening into day ?—
Shame to the coward thought that e'er betray'd
The noon of manhood to a myrtle shade !—
If Hope's creative spirit cannot raise
One trophy sacred to thy future days,
Scorn the dull crowd that haunt the gloomy shrine
Of hopeless love, to murmur and repine !
But, should a sigh of milder mood express
Thy heart-warm wishes, true to happiness,
Should Heaven's fair harbinger delight to pour
Her blissful visions on thy pensive hour,

No tear to blot thy memory's pictured page,
No fears but such as fancy can assuage;
Though thy wild heart some hapless hour may miss
The peaceful tenor of unvaried bliss,
(For love pursues an ever-devious race,
True to the winding lineaments of grace);
Yet still may HOPE her talisman employ
To snatch from Heaven anticipated joy,
And all her kindred energies impart
That burn the brightest in the purest heart.

When first the Rhodian's mimic art array'd
The Queen of Beauty in her Cyprian shade,
The happy master mingled on his piece
Each look that charm'd him in the fair of Greece.
To faultless Nature true, he stole a grace
From every finer form and sweeter face;
And as he sojourn'd on the Ægean isles,
Woo'd all their love, and treasured all their smiles;
Then glow'd the tints, pure, precious, and refined,
And mortal charms seem'd heavenly when combined!
Love on the picture smiled! Expression pour'd
Her mingling spirit there—and Greece adored!
So thy fair hand, enamour'd Fancy! gleans
The treasured pictures of a thousand scenes;
Thy pencil traces on the lover's thought
Some cottage-home, from towns and toil remote,
Where love and lore may claim alternate hours,
With Peace embosom'd in Idalian bowers!
Remote from busy Life's bewilder'd way,
O'er all his heart shall Taste and Beauty sway!
Free on the sunny slope, or winding shore,
With hermit steps to wander and adore!
There shall he love, when genial morn appears,
Like pensive Beauty smiling in her tears,

To watch the brightening roses of the sky,
And muse on Nature with a poet's eye!—
And when the sun's last splendour lights the deep,
The woods and waves, and murmuring winds asleep;
When fairy harps th' Hesperian planet hail,
And the lone cuckoo sighs along the vale,
His path shall be where streamy mountains swell
Their shadowy grandeur o'er the narrow dell,
Where mouldering piles and forests intervene,
Mingling with darker tints the living green;
No circling hills his ravish'd eye to bound,
Heaven, Earth, and Ocean, blazing all around.
  The moon is up—the watch-tower dimly burns—
And down the vale his sober step returns;
But pauses oft, as winding rocks convey
The still sweet fall of music far away;
And oft he lingers from his home awhile
To watch the dying notes!—and start, and smile!

  Let Winter come! let polar spirits sweep
The darkening world, and tempest-troubled deep!
Though boundless snows the wither'd heath deform,
And the dim sun scarce wanders through the storm,
Yet shall the smile of social love repay,
With mental light, the melancholy day!
And, when its short and sullen noon is o'er,
The ice-chain'd waters slumbering on the shore,
How bright the faggots in his little hall
Blaze on the hearth, and warm the pictured wall!
  How blest he names, in Love's familiar tone,
The kind fair friend, by nature mark'd his own;
And, in the waveless mirror of his mind,
Views the fleet years of pleasure left behind,
Since when her empire o'er his heart began!
Since first he call'd her his before the holy man!

Trim the gay taper in his rustic dome,
And light the wintry paradise of home ;
And let the half-uncurtain'd window hail
Some way-worn man benighted in the vale !
Now, while the moaning night-wind rages high,
As sweep the shot-stars down the troubled sky,
While fiery hosts in Heaven's wide circle play,
And bathe in lurid light the milky-way,
Safe from the storm, the meteor, and the shower,
Some pleasing page shall charm the solemn hour—
With pathos shall command, with wit beguile,
A generous tear of anguish, or a smile—
Thy woes, Arion ! and thy simple tale,
O'er all the heart shall triumph and prevail !
Charm'd as they read the verse too sadly true,
How gallant Albert, and his weary crew,
Heaved o'er their guns, their foundering bark to save,
And toil'd—and shriek'd—and perish'd on the wave !

Yes, at the dead of night, by Lonna's steep,
The seaman's cry was heard along the deep ;
There on his funeral waters, dark and wild,
The dying father bless'd his darling child !
Oh ! Mercy, shield her innocence, he cried,
Spent on the prayer his bursting heart, and died !

Or they will learn how generous worth sublimes
The robber Moor, and pleads for all his crimes !
How poor Amelia kiss'd, with many a tear,
His hand, blood-stain'd, but ever, ever dear !
Hung on the tortured bosom of her lord,
And wept and pray'd perdition from his sword !
Nor sought in vain ! at that heart-piercing cry
The strings of Nature crack'd with agony !
He, with delirious laugh, the dagger hurl'd,
And burst the ties that bound him to the world !

Turn from his dying words, that smite with steel

The shuddering thoughts, or wind them on the wheel—
Turn to the gentler melodies that suit
Thalia's harp, or Pan's Arcadian lute;
Or, down the stream of Truth's historic page,
From clime to clime descend, from age to age!
Yet there, perhaps, may darker scenes obtrude
Than Fancy fashions in her wildest mood;
There shall he pause with horrent brow, to rate
What millions died—that Cæsar might be great!
Or learn the fate that bleeding thousands bore,
March'd by their Charles to Dnieper's swampy shore;
Faint in his wounds, and shivering in the blast,
The Swedish soldier sunk—and groan'd his last!
File after file the stormy showers benumb,
Freeze every standard-sheet, and hush the drum!
Horseman and horse confess'd the bitter pang,
And arms and warriors fell with hollow clang!
Yet, ere he sunk in Nature's last repose,
Ere life's warm torrent to the fountain froze,
The dying man to Sweden turn'd his eye,
Thought of his home, and closed it with a sigh!
Imperial Pride look'd sullen on his plight,
And Charles beheld—nor shudder'd at the sight!

Above, below, in Ocean, Earth, and Sky,
Thy fairy worlds, Imagination, lie;
And HOPE attends, companion of the way,
Thy dream by night, thy visions of the day!
In yonder pensile orb, and every sphere
That gems the starry girdle of the year;
In those unmeasured worlds, she bids thee tell,
Pure from their God, created millions dwell,
Whose names and natures, unreveal'd below,
We yet shall learn, and wonder as we know;
For, as Iona's saint, a giant form,

Throned on her towers, conversing with the storm,
(When o'er each Runic altar, weed-entwined,
The vesper clock tolls mournful to the wind),
Counts every wave-worn isle, and mountain hoar,
From Kilda to the green Ierne's shore;
So, when thy pure and renovated mind
This perishable dust hath left behind,
Thy seraph eye shall count the starry train,
Like distant isles embosom'd in the main;
Rapt to the shrine where motion first began,
And light and life in mingling torrent ran;
From whence each bright rotundity was hurl'd,
The throne of God,—the centre of the world!

Oh! vainly wise, the moral Muse hath sung
That suasive HOPE hath but a Siren tongue!
True; she may sport with life's untutor'd day,
Nor heed the solace of its last decay,
The guileless heart, her happy mansion, spurn,
And part, like Ajut—never to return!

But yet, methinks, when Wisdom shall assuage
The grief and passions of our greener age,
Though dull the close of life, and far away
Each flower that hail'd the dawning of the day;
Yet o'er her lovely hopes, that once were dear,
The time-taught spirit, pensive, not severe,
With milder griefs her aged eye shall fill,
And weep their falsehood, though she loves them still!

Thus, with forgiving tears, and reconciled,
The king of Judah mourn'd his rebel child!
Musing on days, when yet the guiltless boy
Smiled on his sire, and fill'd his heart with joy!
"My Absalom!" the voice of Nature cried,
"Oh! that for thee thy father could have died!
For bloody was the deed, and rashly done,
That slew my Absalom!—my son!—my son!"

Unfading HOPE! when life's last embers burn,
When soul to soul, and dust to dust return!
Heaven to thy charge resigns the awful hour!
Oh! then, thy kingdom comes! Immortal Power!
What though each spark of earth-born rapture fly
The quivering lip, pale cheek, and closing eye!
Bright to the soul thy seraph hands convey
The morning dream of life's eternal day—
Then, then, the triumph and the trance begin,
And all the phœnix spirit burns within!
Oh! deep-enchanting prelude to repose,
The dawn of bliss, the twilight of our woes!—
Yet half I hear the panting spirit sigh,
It is a dread and awful thing to die!
Mysterious worlds, untravell'd by the sun!
Where Time's far-wandering tide has never run,
From your unfathom'd shades, and viewless spheres,
A warning comes, unheard by other ears:
'Tis Heaven's commanding trumpet, long and loud,
Like Sinai's thunder, pealing from the cloud!
While Nature hears, with terror-mingled trust,
The shock that hurls her fabric to the dust;
And, like the trembling Hebrew, when he trod
The roaring waves, and call'd upon his God,
With mortal terrors clouds immortal bliss,
And shrieks, and hovers o'er the dark abyss!
Daughter of Faith, awake, arise, illume
The dread unknown, the chaos of the tomb;
Melt, and dispel, ye spectre-doubts, that roll
Cimmerian darkness o'er the parting soul!
Fly, like the moon-eyed herald of Dismay,
Chased on his night-steed by the star of day!
The strife is o'er—the pangs of Nature close,
And life's last rapture triumphs o'er her woes.
Hark! as the spirit eyes, with eagle gaze,

The noon of Heaven, undazzled by the blaze,
On heavenly winds that waft her to the sky,
Float the sweet tones of star-born melody;
Wild as that hallow'd anthem sent to hail
Bethlehem's shepherds in the lonely vale,
When Jordan hush'd his waves, and midnight still
Watch'd on the holy towers of Zion hill!

Soul of the just! companion of the dead!
Where is thy home, and whither art thou fled?
Back to its heavenly source thy being goes,
Swift as the comet wheels to whence he rose;
Doom'd on his airy path awhile to burn,
And doom'd, like thee, to travel and return.—
Hark! from the world's exploding centre driven,
With sounds that shook the firmament of Heaven,
Careers the fiery giant, fast and far,
On bickering wheels, and adamantine car;
From planet whirl'd to planet more remote,
He visits realms beyond the reach of thought;
But wheeling homeward, when his course is run,
Curbs the red yoke, and mingles with the sun!
So hath the traveller of earth unfurl'd
Her trembling wings, emerging from the world;
And o'er the path by mortal never trod,
Sprung to her source, the bosom of her God!

Oh! lives there, Heaven! beneath thy dread expanse,
One hopeless, dark idolater of Chance,
Content to feed, with pleasures unrefined,
The lukewarm passions of a lowly mind;
Who, mouldering earthward, 'reft of every trust,
In joyless union wedded to the dust,
Could all his parting energy dismiss,
And call this barren world sufficient bliss?—
There live, alas! of heaven-directed-mien,
Of cultured soul, and sapient eye serene,

Who hail thee, Man! the pilgrim of a day,
Spouse of the worm, and brother of the clay,
Frail as the leaf in Autumn's yellow bower,
Dust in the wind, or dew upon the flower;
A friendless slave, a child without a sire,
Whose mortal life and momentary fire
Light to the grave his chance-created form,
As ocean-wrecks illuminate the storm;
And, when the gun's tremendous flash is o'er,
To night and silence sink for evermore!
Are these the pompous tidings ye proclaim,
Lights of the world, and demi-gods of Fame?
Is this your triumph—this your proud applause,
Children of Truth, and champions of her cause?
For this hath Science search'd on weary wing,
By shore and sea—each mute and living thing!
Launch'd with Iberia's pilot from the steep,
To worlds unknown, and isles beyond the deep?
Or round the cope her living chariot driven,
And wheel'd in triumph through the signs of Heaven!
Oh! star-eyed Science, hast thou wander'd there,
To waft us home the message of despair?
Then bind the palm, thy sage's brow to suit,
Of blasted leaf, and death-distilling fruit?
Ah me! the laurell'd wreath that Murder rears,
Blood-nursed, and water'd by the widow's tears,
Seems not so foul, so tainted, and so dread,
As waves the nightshade round the sceptic head.
What is the bigot's torch, the tyrant's chain?
I smile on death, if Heaven-ward HOPE remain!
But, if the warring winds of Nature's strife
Be all the faithless charter of my life,
If Chance awaked, inexorable power,
This frail and feverish being of an hour;
Doom'd o'er the world's precarious scene to sweep

Swift as the tempest travels on the deep,
To know Delight but by her parting smile,
And toil, and wish, and weep a little while;
Then melt, ye elements that form'd in vain
This troubled pulse, and visionary brain!
Fade, ye wild flowers, memorials of my doom,
And sink, ye stars, that light me to the tomb!
Truth, ever lovely,—since the world began,
The foe of tyrants, and the friend of man,—
How can thy words from balmy slumber start
Reposing Virtue, pillow'd on the heart!
Yet, if thy voice the note of thunder roll'd,
And that were true which Nature never told,
Let Wisdom smile not on her conquer'd field;
No rapture dawns, no treasure is reveal'd!
Oh! let her read, nor loudly, nor elate,
The doom that bars us from a better fate;
But, sad as angels for the good man's sin,
Weep to record, and blush to give it in!
And well may Doubt, the mother of Dismay,
Pause at her martyr's tomb, and read the lay.
Down by the wilds of yon deserted vale,
It darkly hints a melancholy tale!
There, as the homeless madman sits alone,
In hollow winds he hears a spirit moan!
And there, they say, a wizard orgie crowds,
When the Moon lights her watch-tower in the clouds.
Poor lost Alonzo! Fate's neglected child!
Mild be the doom of Heaven—as thou wert mild!
For oh! thy heart in holy mould was cast,
And all thy deeds were blameless, but the last.
Poor lost Alonzo! still I seem to hear
The clod that struck thy hollow-sounding bier!
When Friendship paid, in speechless sorrow drown'd,
Thy midnight rites, but not on hallow'd ground!

Cease, every joy, to glimmer on my mind,
But leave—oh! leave the light of HOPE behind!
What though my winged hours of bliss have been,
Like angel-visits, few and far between,
Her musing mood shall every pang appease,
And charm—when pleasures lose the power to please!
Yes; let each rapture, dear to Nature, flee:
Close not the light of Fortune's stormy sea—
Mirth, Music, Friendship, Love's propitious smile,
Chase every care, and charm a little while;
Ecstatic throbs the fluttering heart employ,
And all her strings are harmonised to joy!—
But why so short is Love's delighted hour?
Why fades the dew on Beauty's sweetest flower?
Why can no hymned charm of music heal
The sleepless woes impassion'd spirits feel?
Can Fancy's fairy hands no veil create,
To hide the sad realities of fate?—
No! not the quaint remark, the sapient rule,
Nor all the pride of Wisdom's worldly school,
Have power to soothe, unaided and alone,
The heart that vibrates to a feeling tone!
When stepdame Nature every bliss recalls,
Fleet as the meteor o'er the desert falls;
When, 'reft of all, yon widow'd sire appears
A lonely hermit in the vale of years;
Say, can the world one joyous thought bestow
To Friendship, weeping at the couch of Woe?
No! but a brighter soothes the last adieu,—
Souls of impassion'd mould, she speaks to you!
Weep not, she says, at Nature's transient pain,
Congenial spirits part to meet again!
What plaintive sobs thy filial spirit drew,
What sorrow choked thy long and last adieu!
Daughter of Conrad! when he heard his knell,

And bade his country and his child farewell!
Doom'd the long isles of Sydney-cove to see,
The martyr of his crimes, but true to thee?
Thrice the sad father tore thee from his heart,
And thrice return'd, to bless thee, and to part;
Thrice from his trembling lips he murmur'd low
The plaint that own'd unutterable woe;
Till Faith, prevailing o'er his sullen doom,
As bursts the morn on night's unfathom'd gloom,
Lured his dim eye to deathless hopes sublime,
Beyond the realms of Nature and of Time!

"And weep not thus," he cried, "young Ellenore,
My bosom bleeds, but soon shall bleed no more!
Short shall this half-extinguish'd spirit burn,
And soon these limbs to kindred dust return!
But not, my child, with life's precarious fire,
The immortal ties of Nature shall expire;
These shall resist the triumph of decay,
When time is o'er, and worlds have pass'd away!
Cold in the dust this perish'd heart may lie,
But that which warm'd it once shall never die!
That spark, unburied in its mortal frame,
With living light, eternal, and the same,
Shall beam on Joy's interminable years,
Unveil'd by darkness—unassuaged by tears!

"Yet, on the barren shore and stormy deep,
One tedious watch is Conrad doom'd to weep;
But when I gain the home without a friend,
And press the uneasy couch where none attend,
This last embrace, still cherish'd in my heart,
Shall calm the struggling spirit ere it part!
Thy darling form shall seem to hover nigh,
And hush the groan of life's last agony!

"Farewell! when strangers lift thy father's bier,
And place my nameless stone without a tear;

When each returning pledge hath told my child
That Conrad's tomb is on the desert piled;
And when the dream of troubled Fancy sees
Its lonely rank grass waving in the breeze;
Who then will soothe thy grief, when mine is o'er?
Who will protect thee, helpless Ellenore?
Shall secret scenes thy filial sorrows hide,
Scorn'd by the world, to factious guilt allied?
Ah, no! methinks the generous and the good
Will woo thee from the shades of solitude!
O'er friendless grief Compassion shall awake,
And smile on Innocence, for Mercy's sake!"

Inspiring thought of rapture yet to be,
The tears of Love were hopeless, but for thee!
If in that frame no deathless spirit dwell,
If that faint murmur be the last farewell,
If Fate unite the faithful but to part,
Why is their memory sacred to the heart?
Why does the brother of my childhood seem
Restored awhile in every pleasing dream?
Why do I joy the lonely spot to view,
By artless friendship bless'd when life was new?
Eternal HOPE! when yonder spheres sublime
Peal'd their first notes to sound the march of Time,
Thy joyous youth began—but not to fade.—
When all the sister planets have decay'd;
When wrapt in fire the realms of ether glow,
And Heaven's last thunder shakes the world below;
Thou, undismay'd, shalt o'er the ruins smile,
And light thy torch at Nature's funeral pile.

1799.

POEMS, 1800–1808

CAROLINE

Part I

I'll bid the hyacinth to blow,
  I'll teach my grotto green to be;
And sing my true love, all below
  The holly bower and myrtle tree.

There all his wild-wood sweets to bring,
  The sweet South wind shall wander by,
And with the music of his wing
  Delight my rustling canopy.

Come to my close and clustering bower,
  Thou spirit of a milder clime,
Fresh with the dews of fruit and flower,
  Of mountain heath, and moory thyme.

With all thy rural echoes come,
  Sweet comrade of the rosy day,
Wafting the wild bee's gentle hum,
  Or cuckoo's plaintive roundelay.

Where'er thy morning breath has play'd,
  Whatever isles of ocean fann'd,
Come to my blossom-woven shade,
  Thou wandering wind of fairy-land.

q 562

For sure from some enchanted isle,
Where Heaven and Love their sabbath hold,
Where pure and happy spirits smile,
Of beauty's fairest, brightest mould :

From some green Eden of the deep,
Where Pleasure's sigh alone is heaved,
Where tears of rapture lovers weep,
Endear'd, undoubting, undeceived :

From some sweet paradise afar,
Thy music wanders, distant, lost—
Where Nature lights her leading star,
And love is never, never cross'd.

Oh, gentle gale of Eden bowers,
If back thy rosy feet should roam,
To revel with the cloudless Hours
In Nature's more propitious home,

Name to thy loved Elysian groves,
That o'er enchanted spirits twine,
A fairer form than cherub loves,
And let the name be CAROLINE.

CAROLINE

PART II

TO THE EVENING STAR

GEM of the crimson-colour'd Even,
Companion of retiring day,
Why at the closing gates of heaven,
Beloved star, dost thou delay?

So fair thy pensile beauty burns,
When soft the tear of twilight flows ;
So due thy plighted love returns
To chambers brighter than the rose :

To Peace, to Pleasure, and to Love,
So kind a star thou seem'st to be,
Sure some enamour'd orb above
Descends and burns to meet with thee.

Thine is the breathing, blushing hour,
When all unheavenly passions fly,
Chased by the soul-subduing power
Of Love's delicious witchery.

O ! sacred to the fall of day,
Queen of propitious stars, appear,
And early rise, and long delay,
When Caroline herself is here !

Shine on her chosen green resort,
Whose trees the sunward summit crown,
And wanton flowers, that well may court
An angel's feet to tread them down.

Shine on her sweetly scented road,
Thou star of evening's purple dome,
That lead'st the nightingale abroad,
And guid'st the pilgrim to his home.

Shine where my charmer's sweeter breath
Embalms the soft exhaling dew,
Where dying winds a sigh bequeath
To kiss the cheek of rosy hue.

Where, winnow'd by the gentle air,
Her silken tresses darkly flow,
And fall upon her brow so fair,
Like shadows on the mountain snow.

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Thus, ever thus, at day's decline,
In converse sweet, to wander far,
O bring with thee my Caroline,
And thou shalt be my Ruling Star!

1801.

ODE TO WINTER

When first the fiery-mantled sun
His heavenly race began to run;
Round the earth and ocean blue,
His children four the Seasons flew.
First, in green apparel dancing,
The young Spring smiled with angel grace;
Rosy Summer next advancing
Rush'd into her sire's embrace:—
Her bright-hair'd sire, who bade her keep
For ever nearest to his smiles,
On Calpe's olive-shaded steep,
On India's citron-cover'd isles:
More remote and buxom-brown,
The Queen of vintage bow'd before his throne;
A rich pomegranate gemm'd her crown,
A ripe sheaf bound her zone.

But howling Winter fled afar,
To hills that prop the polar star,
And loves on deer-borne car to ride
With barren Darkness by his side,
Round the shore where loud Lofoden
Whirls to death the roaring whale,
Round the hall where Runic Odin
Howls his war-song to the gale;

Save when adown the ravaged globe
He travels on his native storm,
Deflowering Nature's grassy robe,
And trampling on her faded form :—
Till light's returning lord assume
The shaft that drives him to his polar field,
Of power to pierce his raven plume
And crystal-cover'd shield.

Oh, sire of storms ! whose savage ear
The Lapland drum delights to hear,
When Frenzy with her blood-shot eye
Implores thy dreadful deity,
Archangel ! power of desolation !
Fast descending as thou art,
Say, hath mortal invocation
Spells to touch thy stony heart ?
Then, sullen Winter, hear my prayer,
And gently rule the ruin'd year ;
Nor chill the wanderer's bosom bare,
Nor freeze the wretch's falling tear ;—
To shuddering Want's unmantled bed
Thy horror-breathing agues cease to lend,
And gently on the orphan head
Of innocence descend.—

But chiefly spare, O king of clouds !
The sailor on his airy shrouds ;
When wrecks and beacons strew the steep,
And spectres walk along the deep.
Milder yet thy snowy breezes
Pour on yonder tented shores,
Where the Rhine's broad billow freezes,
Or the dark-brown Danube roars.
Oh, winds of Winter ! list ye there
To many a deep and dying groan ;

Or start, ye demons of the midnight air,
  At shrieks and thunders louder than your own.
Alas! ev'n your unhallow'd breath
  May spare the victim fallen low;
But man will ask no truce to death,—
  No bounds to human woe.

1800.

LINES

ON LEAVING A SCENE IN BAVARIA

Adieu the woods and waters' side,
  Imperial Danube's rich domain!
Adieu the grotto, wild and wide,
  The rocks abrupt, and grassy plain!
  For pallid Autumn once again
Hath swell'd each torrent of the hill;
  Her clouds collect, her shadows sail,
  And watery winds that sweep the vale
Grow loud and louder still.

But not the storm, dethroning fast
  Yon monarch oak of massy pile;
Nor river roaring to the blast
  Around its dark and desert isle;
  Nor church-bell tolling to beguile
The cloud-born thunder passing by,
  Can sound in discord to my soul:
  Roll on, ye mighty waters, roll!
And rage, thou darken'd sky!

Thy blossoms now no longer bright;
  Thy wither'd woods no longer green;

Yet, Eldurn shore, with dark delight
I visit thy unlovely scene!
For many a sunset hour serene
My steps have trod thy mellow dew;
When his green light the glow-worm gave,
When Cynthia from the distant wave
Her twilight anchor drew,

And plough'd, as with a swelling sail,
The billowy clouds and starry sea;
Then while thy hermit nightingale
Sang on his fragrant apple-tree,—
Romantic, solitary, free,
The visitant of Eldurn's shore,
On such a moonlight mountain stray'd,
As echo'd to the music made
By Druid harps of yore.

Around thy savage hills of oak,
Around thy waters bright and blue,
No hunter's horn the silence broke,
No dying shriek thine echo knew;
But safe, sweet Eldurn woods, to you
The wounded wild deer ever ran,
Whose myrtle bound their grassy cave,
Whose very rocks a shelter gave
From blood-pursuing man.

Oh heart effusions, that arose
From nightly wanderings cherish'd here;
To him who flies from many woes,
Even homeless deserts can be dear!
The last and solitary cheer

Of those that own no earthly home,
Say—is it not, ye banish'd race,
In such a loved and lonely place
Companionless to roam?

Yes! I have loved thy wild abode,
Unknown, unplough'd, untrodden shore;
Where scarce the woodman finds a road,
And scarce the fisher plies an oar:
For man's neglect I love thee more;
That art nor avarice intrude
To tame thy torrent's thunder-shock,
Or prune thy vintage of the rock
Magnificently rude.

Unheeded spreads thy blossom'd bud
Its milky bosom to the bee;
Unheeded falls along the flood
Thy desolate and aged tree.
Forsaken scene, how like to thee
The fate of unbefriended Worth!
Like thine her fruit dishonour'd falls;
Like thee in solitude she calls
A thousand treasures forth.

Oh! silent spirit of the place,
If, lingering with the ruin'd year,
Thy hoary form and awful face
I yet might watch and worship here!
Thy storm were music to mine ear,
Thy wildest walk a shelter given
Sublimer thoughts on earth to find,
And share, with no unhallow'd mind,
The majesty of heaven.

What though the bosom friends of Fate,—
  Prosperity's unweaned brood,—
Thy consolations cannot rate,
  O self-dependent Solitude!
  Yet with a spirit unsubdued,
Though darken'd by the clouds of Care
  To worship thy congenial gloom,
  A pilgrim to the Prophet's tomb
The Friendless shall repair.

On him the world hath never smiled
  Or look'd but with accusing eye;—
All-silent goddess of the wild,
  To thee that misanthrope shall fly!
  I hear his deep soliloquy,
I mark his proud but ravaged form,
  As stern he wraps his mantle round,
  And bids, on winter's bleakest ground,
Defiance to the storm.

Peace to his banish'd heart, at last,
  In thy dominions shall descend,
And, strong as beechwood in the blast,
  His spirit shall refuse to bend;
  Enduring life without a friend,
The world and falsehood left behind,
  Thy votary shall bear elate,
  (Triumphant o'er opposing Fate),
His dark inspired mind.

But dost thou, Folly, mock the Muse
  A wanderer's mountain walk to sing,
Who shuns a warring world, nor woos
  The vulture cover of its wing?
  Then fly, thou cowering, shivering thing,

Back to the fostering world beguiled,
To waste in self-consuming strife
The loveless brotherhood of life,
Reviling and reviled !

Away, thou lover of the race
That hither chased yon weeping deer !
If Nature's all majestic face
More pitiless than man's appear ;
Or if the wild winds seem more drear
Than man's cold charities below,
Behold around his peopled plains,
Where'er the social savage reigns,
Exuberance of woe !

His art and honours would'st thou seek
Emboss'd on grandeur's giant walls ?
Or hear his moral thunders speak
Where senates light their airy halls,
Where man his brother man enthrals ;
Or sends his whirlwind warrants forth
To rouse the slumbering fiends of war,
To dye the blood-warm waves afar,
And desolate the earth ?

From clime to clime pursue the scene,
And mark in all thy spacious way,
Where'er the tyrant man has been,
There Peace, the cherub, cannot stay ;
In wilds and woodlands far away
She builds her solitary bower,
Where only anchorites have trod,
Or friendless men, to worship God,
Have wander'd for an hour.

In such a far forsaken vale,—
And such, sweet Eldurn vale, is thine,—
Afflicted nature shall inhale
Heaven-borrow'd thoughts and joys divine ;
No longer wish, no more repine
For man's neglect or woman's scorn ;—
Then wed thee to an exile's lot,
For if the world hath loved thee not,
Its absence may be borne.

1800.

LINES ON REVISITING CATHCART

Oh ! scenes of my childhood, and dear to my heart,
Ye green waving woods on the margin of Cart,
How blest in the morning of life I have stray'd
By the stream of the vale and the grass-cover'd glade !

Then, then every rapture was young and sincere,
Ere the sunshine of bliss was bedimm'd by a tear,
And a sweeter delight every scene seem'd to lend,
That the mansion of peace was the home of a Friend.

Now the scenes of my childhood and dear to my heart
All pensive I visit, and sigh to depart ;
Their flowers seem to languish, their beauty to cease,
For a *stranger* inhabits the mansion of peace.

But hush'd be the sigh that untimely complains,
While Friendship and all its enchantment remains,
While it blooms like the flower of a winterless clime,
Untainted by chance, unabated by time.

1800.

THE BEECH TREE'S PETITION

O LEAVE this barren spot to me!
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen tree!
Though bush or floweret never grow
My dark unwarming shade below;
Nor summer bud perfume the dew
Of rosy blush, or yellow hue!
Nor fruits of autumn, blossom-born,
My green and glossy leaves adorn;
Nor murmuring tribes from me derive
Th' ambrosial amber of the hive;
Yet leave this barren spot to me:
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen tree!

Thrice twenty summers I have seen
The sky grow bright, the forest green;
And many a wintry wind have stood
In bloomless, fruitless solitude,
Since childhood in my pleasant bower
First spent its sweet and sportive hour:
Since youthful lovers in my shade
Their vows of truth and rapture made;
And on my trunk's surviving frame
Carved many a long-forgotten name.
Oh! by the sighs of gentle sound,
First breathed upon this sacred ground;
By all that Love has whisper'd here,
Or Beauty heard with ravish'd ear;
As Love's own altar honour me:
Spare, woodman, spare the beechen tree!

1801.

LINES

WRITTEN ON VISITING A SCENE IN ARGYLESHIRE

At the silence of twilight's contemplative hour
I have mused, in a sorrowful mood,
On the wind-shaken weeds that embosom the bower
Where the home of my forefathers stood.
All ruin'd and wild is their roofless abode,
And lonely the dark raven's sheltering tree;
And travell'd by few is the grass-cover'd road,
Where the hunter of deer and the warrior trode
To his hills that encircle the sea.

Yet wandering I found on my ruinous walk,
By the dial-stone aged and green,
One rose of the wilderness left on its stalk,
To mark where a garden had been.
Like a brotherless hermit, the last of its race,
All wild in the silence of nature, it drew,
From each wandering sun-beam, a lonely embrace,
For the night-weed and thorn overshadow'd the place,
Where the flower of my forefathers grew.

Sweet bud of the wilderness! emblem of all
That remains in this desolate heart!
The fabric of bliss to its centre may fall,
But patience shall never depart!
Though the wilds of enchantment, all vernal and bright,
In the days of delusion by fancy combined
With the vanishing phantoms of love and delight,
Abandon my soul, like a dream of the night,
And leave but a desert behind.

Be hush'd, my dark spirit! for wisdom condemns
When the faint and the feeble deplore;
Be strong as the rock of the ocean that stems
A thousand wild waves on the shore!
Through the perils of chance, and the scowl of disdain,
May thy front be unalter'd, thy courage elate!
Yea! even the name I have worshipp'd in vain
Shall awake not the sigh of remembrance again:
To bear is to conquer our fate.

1801.

EXILE OF ERIN

THERE came to the beach a poor Exile of Erin,
The dew on his thin robe was heavy and chill:
For his country he sigh'd, when at twilight repairing
To wander alone by the wind-beaten hill:
But the day-star attracted his eye's sad devotion,
For it rose o'er his own native isle of the ocean,
Where once, in the fire of his youthful emotion,
He sang the bold anthem of Erin go bragh.

Sad is my fate! said the heart-broken stranger;
The wild deer and wolf to a covert can flee,
But I have no refuge from famine and danger,
A home and a country remain not to me.
Never again, in the green sunny bowers,
Where my forefathers lived, shall I spend the sweet hours,
Or cover my harp with the wild-woven flowers,
And strike to the numbers of Erin go bragh!

Erin, my country! though sad and forsaken,
In dreams I revisit thy sea-beaten shore;
But, alas! in a far foreign land I awaken,
And sigh for the friends who can meet me no more!
Oh cruel fate! wilt thou never replace me
In a mansion of peace—where no perils can chase me?
Never again shall my brothers embrace me?
They died to defend me, or live to deplore!

Where is my cabin-door, fast by the wild wood?
Sisters and sire! did ye weep for its fall?
Where is the mother that look'd on my childhood?
And where is the bosom friend, dearer than all?
Oh! my sad heart! long abandon'd by pleasure,
Why did it dote on a fast-fading treasure?
Tears, like the rain-drop, may fall without measure,
But rapture and beauty they cannot recall.

Yet, all its sad recollections suppressing,
One dying wish my lone bosom can draw:
Erin! an exile bequeaths thee his blessing!
Land of my forefathers! Erin go bragh!
Buried and cold when my heart stills her motion,
Green be thy fields,—sweetest isle of the ocean!
And thy harp-striking bards sing aloud with devotion,—
Erin mavournin—Erin go bragh!

1801.

YE MARINERS OF ENGLAND

A NAVAL ODE

I

Ye Mariners of England !
That guard our native seas ;
Whose flag has braved, a thousand years,
The battle and the breeze !
Your glorious standard launch again
To match another foe !
And sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow ;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

II

The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave !—
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And Ocean was their grave :
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell,
Your manly hearts shall glow,
As ye sweep through the deep,
While the stormy winds do blow ;
While the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

III

Britannia needs no bulwark,
No towers along the steep ;

Her march is o'er the mountain-waves,
Her home is on the deep.
With thunders from her native oak,
She quells the floods below,—
As they roar on the shore,
When the stormy winds do blow;
When the battle rages loud and long,
And the stormy winds do blow.

IV

The meteor flag of England
Shall yet terrific burn;
Till danger's troubled night depart,
And the star of peace return.
Then, then, ye ocean-warriors!
Our song and feast shall flow
To the fame of your name,
When the storm has ceased to blow;
When the fiery fight is heard no more,
And the storm has ceased to blow.

1801.

HOHENLINDEN

On Linden, when the sun was low,
All bloodless lay th' untrodden snow,
And dark as winter was the flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

But Linden saw another sight,
When the drum beat, at dead of night,
Commanding fires of death to light
The darkness of her scenery.

By torch and trumpet fast array'd,
Each horseman drew his battle-blade,
And furious every charger neigh'd,
To join the dreadful revelry.

Then shook the hills with thunder riven,
Then rush'd the steed to battle driven,
And louder than the bolts of heaven,
Far flash'd the red artillery.

But redder yet that light shall glow
On Linden's hills of stained snow,
And bloodier yet the torrent flow
Of Iser, rolling rapidly.

'Tis morn, but scarce yon level sun
Can pierce the war-clouds, rolling dun,
Where furious Frank, and fiery Hun,
Shout in their sulph'rous canopy

The combat deepens. On, ye brave,
Who rush to glory, or the grave!
Wave, Munich! all thy banners wave,
And charge with all thy chivalry!

Few, few, shall part where many meet!
The snow shall be their winding-sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

1802.

LOCHIËL'S WARNING

WIZARD—LOCHIËL

WIZARD

LOCHIËL, Lochiël! beware of the day
When the Lowlands shall meet thee in battle array!
For a field of the dead rushes red on my sight,
And the clans of Culloden are scatter'd in fight.
They rally, they bleed, for their kingdom and crown;
Woe, woe to the riders that trample them down!
Proud Cumberland prances, insulting the slain,
And their hoof-beaten bosoms are trod to the plain.
But hark! through the fast-flashing lightning of war,
What steed to the desert flies frantic and far?
'Tis thine, O Glenullin! whose bride shall await,
Like a love-lighted watch-fire, all night at the gate.
A steed comes at morning: no rider is there;
But its bridle is red with the sign of despair.
Weep, Albin! to death and captivity led!
Oh weep! but thy tears cannot number the dead:
For a merciless sword on Culloden shall wave,
Culloden! that reeks with the blood of the brave.

LOCHIËL

Go, preach to the coward, thou death-telling seer!
Or, if gory Culloden so dreadful appear,
Draw, dotard, around thy old wavering sight
This mantle, to cover the phantoms of fright.

WIZARD

Ha! laugh'st thou, Lochiël, my vision to scorn?
Proud bird of the mountain, thy plume shall be torn!

Say, rush'd the bold eagle exultingly forth,
From his home, in the dark rolling clouds of the north?
Lo! the death-shot of foemen outspeeding, he rode
Companionless, bearing destruction abroad;
But down let him stoop from his havoc on high!
Ah! home let him speed,—for the spoiler is nigh.
Why flames the far summit? Why shoot to the blast
Those embers, like stars from the firmament cast?
'Tis the fire-shower of ruin, all dreadfully driven
From his eyrie, that beacons the darkness of heaven.
O, crested Lochiël! the peerless in might,
Whose banners arise on the battlements' height,
Heaven's fire is around thee, to blast and to burn;
Return to thy dwelling! all lonely return!
For the blackness of ashes shall mark where it stood,
And a wild mother scream o'er her famishing brood.

LOCHIËL

False Wizard, avaunt! I have marshall'd my clan,
Their swords are a thousand, their bosoms are one!
They are true to the last of their blood and their breath,
And like reapers descend to the harvest of death.
Then welcome be Cumberland's steed to the shock!
Let him dash his proud foam like a wave on the rock!
But woe to his kindred, and woe to his cause,
When Albin her claymore indignantly draws;
When her bonneted chieftains to victory crowd,
Clanronald the dauntless, and Moray the proud,
All plaided and plumed in their tartan array——

WIZARD

——Lochiël, Lochiël! beware of the day;
For, dark and despairing, my sight I may seal,
But man cannot cover what God would reveal;

'Tis the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before.
I tell thee, Culloden's dread echoes shall ring
With the bloodhounds that bark for thy fugitive king.
Lo ! anointed by Heaven with the vials of wrath,
Behold, where he flies on his desolate path !
Now in darkness and billows, he sweeps from my sight :
Rise, rise ! ye wild tempests, and cover his flight !
'Tis finished. Their thunders are hush'd on the moors :
Culloden is lost, and my country deplores.
But where is the iron-bound prisoner ? Where ?
For the red eye of battle is shut in despair.
Say, mounts he the ocean-wave, banish'd, forlorn,
Like a limb from his country cast bleeding and torn ?
Ah no ! for a darker departure is near ;
The war-drum is muffled, and black is the bier ;
His death-bell is tolling : oh ! mercy, dispel
Yon sight, that it freezes my spirit to tell !
Life flutters convulsed in his quivering limbs,
And his blood-streaming nostril in agony swims.
Accursed be the faggots, that blaze at his feet,
Where his heart shall be thrown, ere it ceases to beat,
With the smoke of its ashes to poison the gale——

LOCHIËL

——Down, soothless insulter ! I trust not the tale :
For never shall Albin a destiny meet,
So black with dishonour, so foul with retreat.
Tho' my perishing ranks should be strew'd in their gore,
Like ocean-weeds heap'd on the surf-beaten shore,
Lochiël, untainted by flight or by chains,
While the kindling of life in his bosom remains,
Shall victor exult, or in death be laid low,
With his back to the field, and his feet to the foe !

And leaving in battle no blot on his name,
Look proudly to Heaven from the death-bed of fame.

1802.

GLENARA

O HEARD ye yon pibroch sound sad in the gale,
Where a band cometh slowly with weeping and wail?
'Tis the chief of Glenara laments for his dear;
And her sire, and the people, are call'd to her bier.

Glenara came first with the mourners and shroud;
Her kinsmen they follow'd, but mourn'd not aloud:
Their plaids all their bosoms were folded around;
They march'd all in silence,—they look'd on the ground.

In silence they reach'd over mountain and moor
To a heath, where the oak-tree grew lonely and hoar:
"Now here let us place the grey stone of her cairn:
Why speak ye no word!"—said Glenara the stern.

"And tell me, I charge you! ye clan of my spouse,
Why fold ye your mantles, why cloud ye your brows?"
So spake the rude chieftain:—no answer is made,
But each mantle unfolding a dagger display'd.

"I dreamt of my lady, I dreamt of her shroud,"
Cried a voice from the kinsmen, all wrathful and loud;
"And empty that shroud and that coffin did seem:
Glenara! Glenara! now read me my dream!"

O! pale grew the cheek of that chieftain, I ween,
When the shroud was unclosed, and no lady was seen;
When a voice from the kinsmen spoke louder in scorn,
'Twas the youth who had loved the fair Ellen of Lorn:

"I dreamt of my lady, I dreamt of her grief,
I dreamt that her lord was a barbarous chief:
On a rock of the ocean fair Ellen did seem;
Glenara! Glenara! now read me my dream!"

In dust, low the traitor has knelt to the ground,
And the desert reveal'd where his lady was found;
From a rock of the ocean that beauty is borne—
Now joy to the house of fair Ellen of Lorn!

1802.

LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER

A CHIEFTAIN, to the Highlands bound,
Cries, "Boatman, do not tarry!
And I'll give thee a silver pound
To row us o'er the ferry."—

"Now who be ye, would cross Lochgyle,
This dark and stormy water?"
"O, I'm the chief of Ulva's isle,
And this Lord Ullin's daughter.—

And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together,
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

His horsemen hard behind us ride;
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride
When they have slain her lover?"—

Out spoke the hardy Highland wight,
"I'll go, my chief—I'm ready:—
It is not for your silver bright;
But for your winsome lady:

And by my word! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry;
So though the waves are raging white,
I'll row you o'er the ferry."—

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water-wraith was shrieking;
And in the scowl of heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind,
And as the night grew drearer,
Adown the glen rode armed men,
Their trampling sounded nearer.—

"O haste thee, haste!" the lady cries,
"Though tempests round us gather;
I'll meet the raging of the skies,
But not an angry father."—

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her,—
When, oh! too strong for human hand,
The tempest gather'd o'er her.—

And still they row'd amidst the roar
Of waters fast prevailing:
Lord Ullin reach'd that fatal shore;
His wrath was changed to wailing.—

For sore dismay'd, through storm and shade,
His child he did discover:—
One lovely hand she stretch'd for aid,
And one was round her lover.

"Come back! come back!" he cried in grief,
"Across this stormy water;
And I'll forgive your Highland chief,
My daughter!—oh my daughter!"—

'Twas vain:—the loud waves lash'd the shore,
Return or aid preventing:—
The waters wild went o'er his child,
And he was left lamenting.

BATTLE OF THE BALTIC

I

Of Nelson and the North
Sing the glorious day's renown,
When to battle fierce came forth
All the might of Denmark's crown,
And her arms along the deep proudly shone;
By each gun the lighted brand,
In a bold determined hand,
And the Prince of all the land
Led them on.—

II

Like leviathans afloat,
Lay their bulwarks on the brine;
While the sign of battle flew
On the lofty British line:
It was ten of April morn by the chime:
As they drifted on their path,
There was silence deep as death;
And the boldest held his breath,
For a time.—

III

But the might of England flush'd
To anticipate the scene;
And her van the fleeter rush'd
O'er the deadly space between.
"Hearts of oak!" our captains cried; when each gun
From its adamantine lips
Spread a death-shade round the ships,
Like the hurricane eclipse
Of the sun.

IV

Again! again! again!
And the havoc did not slack,
Till a feeble cheer the Dane
To our cheering sent us back;—
Their shots along the deep slowly boom:—
Then ceased—and all is wail,
As they strike the shatter'd sail;
Or, in conflagration pale,
Light the gloom.—

V

Out spoke the victor then,
As he hail'd them o'er the wave;
"Ye are brothers! ye are men!
And we conquer but to save:—
So peace instead of death let us bring;
But yield, proud foe, thy fleet,
With the crews, at England's feet,
And make submission meet
To our King."—

VI

Then Denmark bless'd our chief,
That he gave her wounds repose;
And the sounds of joy and grief
From her people wildly rose,
As death withdrew his shades from the day;
While the sun look'd smilling bright
O'er a wide and woeful sight,
Where the fires of funeral light
Died away.

VII

Now joy, Old England, raise!
For the tidings of thy might,
By the festal cities' blaze,
Whilst the wine-cup shines in light;
And yet amidst that joy and uproar,
Let us think of them that sleep,
Full many a fathom deep,
By thy wild and stormy steep,
Elsinore!

VIII

Brave hearts! to Britain's pride
Once so faithful and so true,
On the deck of fame that died;—
With the gallant good Riou:
Soft sigh the winds of Heaven o'er their grave!
While the billow mournful rolls,
And the mermaid's song condoles,
Singing Glory to the souls
Of the brave!

1805-8.

STANZAS ON THE THREATENED INVASION, 1803

Our bosoms we'll bare for the glorious strife,
And our oath is recorded on high,
To prevail in the cause that is dearer than life,
Or crush'd in its ruins to die!
Then rise, fellow freemen, and stretch the right hand,
And swear to prevail in your dear native land!

'Tis the home we hold sacred is laid to our trust—
God bless the green Isle of the brave!
Should a conqueror tread on our forefathers' dust,
It would rouse the old dead from their grave!
Then rise, fellow freemen, and stretch the right hand,
And swear to prevail in your dear native land!

In a Briton's sweet home shall a spoiler abide,
Profaning its loves and its charms?
Shall a Frenchman insult the loved fair at our side?
To arms! oh, my Country, to arms!
Then rise, fellow freemen, and stretch the right hand,
And swear to prevail in your dear native land!

Shall a tyrant enslave us, my countrymen?—No!
His head to the sword shall be given—
A death-bed repentance be taught the proud foe,
And his blood be an offering to Heaven!
Then rise, fellow freemen, and stretch the right hand,
And swear to prevail in your dear native land!

1803.

THE SOLDIER'S DREAM

Our bugles sang truce—for the night-cloud had lower'd,
And the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky ;
And thousands had sunk on the ground overpower'd
The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die.

When reposing that night on my pallet of straw,
By the wolf-scaring faggot that guarded the slain,—
At the dead of the night a sweet vision I saw,
And thrice ere the morning I dreamt it again.

Methought from the battle-field's dreadful array,
Far, far I had roam'd on a desolate track :
'Twas Autumn,—and sunshine arose on the way
To the home of my fathers, that welcom'd me back.

I flew to the pleasant fields traversed so oft
In life's morning march, when my bosom was young ;
I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers sung.

Then pledged we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore,
From my home and my weeping friends never to part ;
My little ones kiss'd me a thousand times o'er,
And my wife sobb'd aloud in her fulness of heart :—

"Stay, stay with us,—rest, thou art weary and worn !"
And fain was their war-broken soldier to stay ;—
But sorrow return'd with the dawning of morn,
And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away.

1804.

STANZAS TO PAINTING

O THOU by whose expressive art
Her perfect image Nature sees
In union with the Graces start,
And sweeter by reflection please!

In whose creative hand the hues
Fresh from yon orient rainbow shine;
I bless thee, Promethéan Muse!
And call thee brightest of the Nine!

Possessing more than vocal power,
Persuasive more than poet's tongue;
Whose lineage, in a raptured hour,
From Love, the Sire of Nature, sprung:

Does Hope her high possession meet?
Is joy triumphant, sorrow flown?
Sweet is the trance, the tremor sweet,
When all we love is all our own.

But oh! thou pulse of pleasure dear,
Slow throbbing, cold, I feel thee part;
Lone absence plants a pang severe,
Or death inflicts a keener dart.

Then for a beam of joy to light
In memory's sad and wakeful eye,
Or bànish from the noon of night
Her dreams of deeper agony,

II.

Shall Song its witching lence roll?
Yea, even the tende air repeat,
That breathed when so was knit to soul,
And heart to heart i nsive beat?

What visions rise ! to charm, to melt !
The lost, the loved, the dead, are near !
Oh, hush that strain too deeply felt !
And cease that solace too severe !

But thou, serenely silent art !
By heaven and love wast taught to lend
A milder solace to the heart,
The sacred image of a friend.

All is not lost ! if, yet possest,
To me that sweet memorial shine :—
If close and closer to my breast
I hold that idol all divine.

Or, gazing through luxurious tears,
Melt o'er the loved departed form,
Till death's cold bosom half appears
With life, and speech, and spirit warm.

She looks ! she lives ! this trancèd hour,
Her bright eye seems a purer gem
Than sparkles on the throne of power,
Or glory's wealthy diadem.

Yes, Genius, yes ! thy mimic aid
A treasure to my soul has given,
Where beauty's canonisèd shade
Smiles in the sainted hues of heaven.

No spectre forms of pleasure fled,
Thy softening, sweetening, tints restore ;
For thou canst give us back the dead,
E'en in the loveliest looks they wore.

Then blest be Nature's guardian Muse,
  Whose hand her perish'd grace redeems;
Whose tablet of a thousand hues
  The mirror of creation seems.

From Love began thy high descent;
  And lovers, charm'd by gifts of thine,
Shall bless thee mutely eloquent;
  And call thee brightest of the Nine!

1802

GERTRUDE OF WYOMING,

A PENNSYLVANIAN TALE

ADVERTISEMENT

MOST of the popular histories of England, as well as of the American war, give an authentic account of the desolation of Wyoming, in Pennsylvania, which took place in 1778, by an incursion of the Indians. The Scenery and Incidents of the following Poem are connected with that event. The testimonies of historians and travellers concur in describing the infant colony as one of the happiest spots of human existence, for the hospitable and innocent manners of the inhabitants, the beauty of the country, and the luxuriant fertility of the soil and climate. In an evil hour, the junction of European with Indian arms converted this terrestrial paradise into a frightful waste. Mr. ISAAC WELD informs us, that the ruins of many of the villages, perforated with balls, and bearing marks of conflagration, were still preserved by the recent inhabitants, when he travelled through America in 1796.

PART I

I

On Susquehanna's side, fair Wyoming!
Although the wild-flower on thy ruin'd wall,
And roofless homes, a sad remembrance bring
Of what thy gentle people did befall;
Yet thou wert once the loveliest land of all
That see the Atlantic wave their morn restore.
Sweet land! may I thy lost delights recall,
And paint thy Gertrude in her bowers of yore,
Whose beauty was the love of Pennsylvania's shore!

II

Delightful Wyoming! beneath thy skies,
The happy shepherd swains had nought to do
But feed their flocks on green declivities,
Or skim perchance thy lake with light canoe,
From morn till evening's sweeter pastime grew,
With timbrel, when beneath the forests brown
Thy lovely maidens would the dance renew;
And aye those sunny mountains half-way down
Would echo flagelet from some romantic town.

III

Then, where of Indian hills the daylight takes
His leave, how might you the flamingo see

Disporting like a meteor on the lakes—
And playful squirrel on his nut-grown tree:
And every sound of life was full of glee,
From merry mock-bird's song, or hum of men;
While hearkening, fearing nought their revelry,
The wild deer arch'd his neck from glades, and then,
Unhunted, sought his woods and wilderness again.

IV

And scarce had Wyoming of war or crime
Heard, but in transatlantic story rung,
For here the exile met from every clime,
And spoke in friendship every distant tongue:
Men from the blood of warring Europe sprung
Were but divided by the running brook;
And happy where no Rhenish trumpet sung,
On plains no sieging mine's volcano shook,
The blue-eyed German changed his sword to pruning-hook.

V

Nor far some Andalusian saraband
Would sound to many a native roundelay—
But who is he that yet a dearer land
Remembers, over hills and far away?
Green Albin! what though he no more survey
Thy ships at anchor on the quiet shore,
Thy pellochs rolling from the mountain bay,
Thy lone sepulchral cairn upon the moor,
And distant isles that hear the loud Corbrechtan roar!

VI

Alas! poor Caledonia's mountaineer,
That want's stern edict e'er, and feudal grief,
Had forced him from a home he loved so dear!
Yet found he here a home, and glad relief,

And plied the beverage from his own fair sheaf,
That fired his Highland blood with mickle glee:
And England sent her men, of men the chief,
Who taught those sires of Empire yet to be,
To plant the tree of life,—to plant fair Freedom's tree!

VII

Here was not mingled in the city's pomp
Of life's extremes the grandeur and the gloom;
Judgment awoke not here her dismal tromp,
Nor seal'd in blood a fellow creature's doom,
Nor mourn'd the captive in a living tomb.
One venerable man, beloved of all,
Sufficed, where innocence was yet in bloom,
To sway the strife, that seldom might befall:
And Albert was their judge in patriarchal hall.

VIII

How reverend was the look, serenely aged,
He bore, this gentle Pennsylvanian sire,
Where all but kindly fervours were assuaged,
Undimm'd by weakness' shade, or turbid ire!
And though, amidst the calm of thought entire,
Some high and haughty features might betray
A soul impetuous once, 'twas earthly fire
That fled composure's intellectual ray,
As Ætna's fires grow dim before the rising day.

IX

I boast no song in magic wonders rife;
But yet, O Nature! is there nought to prize,
Familiar in thy bosom scenes of life?
And dwells in day-light truth's salubrious skies

No form with which the soul may sympathise?—
Young, innocent, on whose sweet forehead mild
The parted ringlet shone in simplest guise,
An inmate in the home of Albert smiled,
Or bless'd his noon-day walk—she was his only child.

X

The rose of England bloom'd on Gertrude's cheek—
What though these shades had seen her birth, her sire
A Briton's independence taught to seek
Far western worlds; and there his household fire
The light of social love did long inspire,
And many a halcyon day he lived to see
Unbroken but by one misfortune dire,
When fate had reft his mutual heart—but she
Was gone—and Gertrude climb'd a widow'd father's knee.

XI

A loved bequest: and I may half impart—
To them that feel the strong paternal tie—
How like a new existence to his heart
That living flower uprose beneath his eye,
Dear as she was, from cherub infancy,
From hours when she would round his garden play,
To time when, as the ripening years went by,
Her lovely mind could culture well repay,
And more engaging grew from pleasing day to day.

XII

I may not paint those thousand infant charms;
(Unconscious fascination, undesign'd!)
The orison repeated in his arms,
For God to bless her sire and all mankind;

The book, the bosom on his knee reclined,
Or how sweet fairy-lore he heard her con,
(The playmate ere the teacher of her mind):
All uncompanion'd else her heart had gone
Till now in Gertrude's eyes their ninth blue summer shone.

XIII

And summer was the tide, and sweet the hour,
When sire and daughter saw, with fleet descent,
An Indian from his bark approach their bower,
Of buskin'd limb, and swarthy lineament;
The red wild feathers on his brow were blent,
And bracelets bound the arm that helped to light
A boy, who seem'd, as he beside him went,
Of Christian vesture, and complexion bright,
Led by his dusky guide, like morning brought by night.

XIV

Yet pensive seem'd the boy for one so young—
The dimple from his polish'd cheek had fled;
When, leaning on his forest-bow unstrung,
Th' Oneyda warrior to the planter said,
And laid his hand upon the stripling's head,
"Peace be to thee! my words this belt approve:
The paths of peace my steps have hither led:
This little nursling, take him to thy love,
And shield the bird unfledged, since gone the parent dove.

XV

"Christian! I am the foeman of thy foe;
Our wampum league thy brethren did embrace:
Upon the Michigan, three moons ago,
We launch'd our pirogues for the bison chase,

And with the Hurons planted for a space,
With true and faithful hands, the olive-stalk ;
But snakes are in the bosoms of their race,
And though they held with us a friendly talk,
The hollow peace-tree fell beneath their tomahawk !

XVI

" It was encamping on the lake's far port,
A cry of Areouski broke our sleep,
Where storm'd an ambush'd foe thy nation's fort,
And rapid, rapid whoops came o'er the deep ;
But long thy country's war-sign on the steep
Appeared through ghastly intervals of light,
And deathfully their thunders seem'd to sweep,
Till utter darkness swallow'd up the sight,
As if a shower of blood had quench'd the fiery fight !

XVII

" It slept—it rose again—on high their tower
Sprung upwards like a torch to light the skies,
Then down again it rain'd an ember shower,
And louder lamentations heard we rise :
As when the evil Manitou that dries
Th' Ohio woods, consumes them in his ire,
In vain the desolated panther flies,
And howls amidst his wilderness of fire :
Alas ! too late, we reach'd and smote those Hurons dire !

XVIII

" But as the fox beneath the nobler hound,
So died their warriors by our battle-brand ;
And from the tree we, with her child, unbound
A lonely mother of the Christian land :—

Her lord—the captain of the British band—
Amidst the slaughter of his soldiers lay.
Scarce knew the widow our delivering hand;
Upon her child she sobb'd, and swoon'd away,
Or shriek'd unto the God to whom the Christians pray.—

XIX

"Our virgins fed her with their kindly bowls
Of fever-balm and sweet sagamité;
But she was journeying to the land of souls,
And lifted up her dying head to pray
That we should bid an ancient friend convey
Her orphan to his home of England's shore;
And take, she said, this token far away
To one that will remember us of yore,
When he beholds the ring that Waldegrave's Julia wore.

XX

"And I, the eagle of my tribe, have rush'd
With this lorn dove."—A sage's self-command
Had quell'd the tears from Albert's heart that gush'd;
But yet his cheek—his agitated hand—
That shower'd upon the stranger of the land
No common boon, in grief but ill beguiled
A soul that was not wont to be unmann'd;
"And stay," he cried, "dear pilgrim of the wild,
Preserver of my old, my boon companion's child!—

XXI

"Child of a race whose name my bosom warms,
On earth's remotest bounds how welcome here!
Whose mother oft, a child, has fill'd these arms,
Young as thyself, and innocently dear;

Whose grandsire was my early life's compeer.
Ah, happiest home of England's happy clime!
How beautiful ev'n now thy scenes appear,
As in the noon and sunshine of my prime!
How gone like yesterday these thrice ten years of time!

XXII

"And Julia! when thou wert like Gertrude now,
Can I forget thee, favourite child of yore?
Or thought I, in thy father's house, when thou
Wert lightest-hearted on his festive floor,
And first of all his hospitable door
To meet and kiss me at my journey's end?
But where was I when Waldegrave was no more?
And thou didst pale thy gentle head extend
In woes, that ev'n the tribe of deserts was thy friend!"

XXIII

He said—and strain'd unto his heart the boy:—
Far differently the mute Oneyda took
His calumet of peace, and cup of joy;
As monumental bronze unchanged his look:
A soul that pity touch'd, but never shook;
Train'd from his tree-rock'd cradle to his bier
The fierce extremes of good and ill to brook
Impassive—fearing but the shame of fear—
A stoic of the woods—a man without a tear.—

XXIV

Yet deem not goodness on the savage stock
Of Outalissi's heart disdain'd to grow;
As lives the oak unwither'd on the rock
By storms above, and barrenness below;

He scorn'd his own, who felt another's woe:
And ere the wolf-skin on his back he flung,
Or laced his mocasins, in act to go,
A song of parting to the boy he sung,
Who slept on Albert's couch, nor heard his friendly tongue.

XXV

"Sleep, wearied one! and in the dreaming land
Shouldst thou to-morrow with thy mother meet,
Oh! tell her spirit that the white man's hand
Hath pluck'd the thorns of sorrow from thy feet;
While I in lonely wilderness shall greet
Thy little footprints—or by traces know
The fountain, where at noon I thought it sweet
To feed thee with the quarry of my bow,
And pour'd the lotus-horn, or slew the mountain roe.

XXVI

"Adieu! sweet scion of the rising sun!
But should affliction's storms thy blossom mock,
Then come again—my own adopted one!
And I will graft thee on a noble stock:
The crocodile, the condor of the rock,
Shall be the pastime of thy sylvan wars;
And I will teach thee, in the battle's shock,
To pay with Huron blood thy father's scars,
And gratulate his soul rejoicing in the stars!"

XXVII

So finish'd he the rhyme (howe'er uncouth)
That true to nature's fervid feelings ran;
(And song is but the eloquence of truth):
Then forth uprose that lone wayfaring man;

But dauntless he, nor chart, nor journey's plan
In woods required, whose trainèd eye was keen
As eagle of the wilderness, to scan
His path by mountain, swamp, or deep ravine,
Or ken far friendly huts on good savannas green.

XXVIII

Old Albert saw him from the valley's side—
His pirogue launch'd—his pilgrimage begun—
Far, like the red-bird's wing, he seem'd to glide ;
Then dived, and vanish'd in the woodlands dun.
Oft, to that spot by tender memory won,
Would Albert climb the promontory's height,
If but a dim sail glimmer'd in the sun ;
But never more, to bless his longing sight,
Was Outalissi hail'd, with bark and plumage bright.

PART II

I

A VALLEY from the river shore withdrawn
Was Albert's home, two quiet woods between,
Whose lofty verdure overlook'd his lawn ;
And waters to their resting-place serene
Came freshening, and reflecting all the scene :
(A mirror in the depth of flowery shelves) ;
So sweet a spot of earth, you might (I ween)
Have guess'd some congregation of the elves,
To sport by summer moons, had shaped it for themselves.

II

Yet wanted not the eye far scope to muse,
Nor vistas open'd by the wandering stream ;
Both where at evening Alleghany views,
Through ridges burning in her western beam,
Lake after lake interminably gleam :
And past those settlers' haunts the eye might roam,
Where earth's unliving silence all would seem ;
Save where on rocks the beaver built his dome,
Or buffalo remote low'd far from human home.

III

But silent not that adverse eastern path,
Which saw Aurora's hills th' horizon crown :
There was the river heard, in bed of wrath,
(A precipice of foam from mountains brown),
Like tumults heard from some far distant town ;
But softening in approach he left his gloom,
And murmur'd pleasantly, and laid him down
To kiss those easy curving banks of bloom,
That lent the windward air an exquisite perfume.—

IV

It seem'd as if those scenes sweet influence had
On Gertrude's soul, and kindness like their own
Inspired those eyes affectionate and glad,
That seem'd to love whate'er they look'd upon ;
Whether with Hebe's mirth her features shone,
Or if a shade more pleasing them o'ercast,
(As if for heavenly musing meant alone) ;
Yet so becomingly th' expression past,
That each succeeding look was lovelier than the last.

V

Nor, guess I, was that Pennsylvanian home,
With all its picturesque and balmy grace,
And fields that were a luxury to roam,
Lost on the soul that look'd from such a face!
Enthusiast of the woods! when years apace
Had bound thy lovely waist with woman's zone,
The sunrise path, at morn, I see thee trace
To hills with high magnolia overgrown,
And joy to breathe the groves, romantic and alone.

VI

The sunrise drew her thoughts to Europe forth,
That thus apostrophised its viewless scene:
"Land of my father's love, my mother's birth!
The home of kindred I have never seen!
We know not other—oceans are between:
Yet say, far friendly hearts from whence we came,
Of us does oft remembrance intervene?
My mother sure—my sire a thought may claim;—
But Gertrude is to you an unregarded name.

VII

"And yet, loved England! when thy name I trace
In many a pilgrim's tale and poet's song,
How can I choose but wish for one embrace
Of them, the dear unknown, to whom belong
My mother's looks,—perhaps her likeness strong?
O parent! with what reverential awe,
From features of thy own related throng,
An image of thy face my soul could draw!
And see thee once again whom I too shortly saw!"

VIII

Yet deem not Gertrude sigh'd for foreign joy ;
To soothe a father's couch her only care,
And keep his reverend head from all annoy :
For this, methinks, her homeward steps repair,
Soon as the morning wreath had bound her hair ;
While yet the wild deer trod in spangling dew,
While boatmen caroll'd to the fresh-blown air,
And woods a horizontal shadow threw,
And early fox appear'd in momentary view.

IX

Apart there was a deep untrodden grot,
Where oft the reading hours sweet Gertrude wore ;
Tradition had not named its lonely spot ;
But here (methinks) might India's sons explore
Their fathers' dust, or lift perchance of yore
Their voice to the great Spirit :—rocks sublime
To human art a sportive semblance bore,
And yellow lichens colour'd all the clime,
Like moonlight battlements, and towers decay'd by time.

X

But high in amphitheatre above,
Gay-tinted woods their massy foliage threw :
Breathed but an air of heaven, and all the grove
As if instinct with living spirit grew,
Rolling its verdant gulfs of every hue ;
And now suspended was the pleasing din,
Now from a murmur faint it swell'd anew,
Like the first note of organ heard within
Cathedral aisles,—ere yet its symphony begin.

XI

It was in this lone valley she would charm
The lingering noon, where flowers a couch had strown :
Her cheek reclining, and her snowy arm
On hillock by the pine-tree half o'ergrown :
And aye that volume on her lap is thrown,
Which every heart of human mould endears ;
With Shakespeare's self she speaks and smiles alone,
And no intruding visitation fears,
To shame the unconscious laugh, or stop her sweetest tears.

XII

And nought within the grove was seen or heard
But stock-doves plaining through its gloom profound,
Or winglet of the fairy humming-bird,
Like atoms of the rainbow fluttering round ;
When, lo ! there enter'd to its inmost ground
A youth, the stranger of a distant land ;
He was, to weet, for eastern mountains bound ;
But late th' equator suns his cheek had tann'd,
And California's gales his roving bosom fann'd.

XIII

A steed, whose rein hung loosely o'er his arm,
He led dismounted ; ere his leisure pace,
Amid the brown leaves, could her ear alarm,
Close he had come, and worshipp'd for a space
Those downcast features :—she her lovely face
Uplift on one, whose lineaments and frame
Wore youth and manhood's intermingled grace :
Iberian seem'd his boot—his robe the same,
And well the Spanish plume his lofty looks became.

XIV

For Albert's home he sought—her finger fair
Has pointed where the father's mansion stood.
Returning from the copse he soon was there;
And soon has Gertrude hied from dark green wood;
Nor joyless by the converse understood,
Between the man of age and pilgrim young,
That gay congeniality of mood
And early liking from acquaintance sprung;
Full fluently conversed their guest in England's tongue.

XV

And well could he his pilgrimage of taste
Unfold,—and much they loved his fervid strain,
While he each fair variety retraced
Of climes, and manners, o'er the eastern main:
Now happy Switzer's hills—romantic Spain,—
Gay lilied fields of France,—or, more refined,
The soft Ausonia's monumental reign;
Nor less each rural image he design'd
Than all the city's pomp and home of human kind.

XVI

Anon some wilder portraiture he draws;
Of Nature's savage glories he would speak,—
The loneliness of earth that overawes,—
Where, resting by some tomb of old Cacique,
The lama-driver on Peruvia's peak
Nor living voice nor motion marks around;
But storks that to the boundless forest shriek
Or wild-cane arch high flung o'er gulf profound,
That fluctuates when the storms of El Dorado sound.

XVII

Pleased with his guest, the good man still would ply
Each earnest question, and his converse court;
But Gertrude, as she eyed him, knew not why
A strange and troubling wonder stopt her short.
"In England thou hast been,—and, by report,
An orphan's name (quoth Albert) may'st have known.
Sad tale!—when latest fell our frontier fort,—
One innocent—one soldier's child—alone
Was spared, and brought to me, who loved him as my own.

XVIII

"Young Henry Waldegrave! three delightful years
These very walls his infant sports did see;
But most I loved him when his parting tears
Alternately bedew'd my child and me:
His sorest parting, Gertrude, was from thee;
Nor half its grief his little heart could hold:
By kindred he was sent for o'er the sea,
They tore him from us when but twelve years old,
And scarcely for his loss have I been yet consoled?"

XIX

His face the wanderer hid—but could not hide
A tear, a smile, upon his cheek that dwell;—
"And speak! mysterious stranger!" (Gertrude cried)
"It is!—it is!—I knew—I knew him well!
'Tis Waldegrave's self, of Waldegrave come to tell!"
A burst of joy the father's lips declare;
But Gertrude speechless on his bosom fell:
At once his open arms embraced the pair;
Was never group more blest in this wide world of care.

XX

"And will ye pardon then" (replied the youth)
"Your Waldegrave's feigned name, and false attire?
I durst not in the neighbourhood, in truth,
The very fortunes of your house enquire;
Lest one that knew me might some tidings dire
Impart, and I my weakness all betray;
For had I lost my Gertrude and my sire,
I meant but o'er your tombs to weep a day;
Unknown I meant to weep, unknown to pass away.

XXI

"But here ye live, ye bloom,—in each dear face,
The changing hand of time I may not blame;
For there, it hath but shed more reverend grace,
And here, of beauty perfected the frame:
And well I know your hearts are still the same—
They could not change—ye look the very way,
As when an orphan first to you I came.
And have ye heard of my poor guide, I pray?
Nay, wherefore weep ye, friends, on such a joyous day?"

XXII

"And art thou here? or is it but a dream?
And wilt thou, Waldegrave, wilt thou, leave us more?"—
"No, never! thou that yet dost lovelier seem
Than aught on earth—than ev'n thyself of yore—
I will not part thee from thy father's shore;
But we shall cherish him with mutual arms,
And hand in hand again the path explore
Which every ray of young remembrance warms,
While thou shalt be my own, with all thy truth and charms!"

XXIII

At morn, as if beneath a galaxy
Of over-arching groves in blossoms white,
Where all was odorous scent and harmony,
And gladness to the heart, nerve, ear, and sight:
There, if, O gentle Love! I read aright
The utterance that seal'd thy sacred bond,
'Twas listening to these accents of delight,
She hid upon his breast those eyes, beyond
Expression's power to paint, all languishingly fond.—

XXIV

"Flower of my life, so lovely and so lone!
Whom I would rather in this desert meet,
Scorning, and scorn'd by fortune's power, than own
Her pomp and splendours lavish'd at my feet!
Turn not from me thy breath, more exquisite
Than odours cast on heaven's own shrine, to please—
Give me thy love, than luxury more sweet,
And more than all the wealth that loads the breeze,
When Coromandel's ships return from Indian seas."—

XXV

Then would that home admit them—happier far
Than grandeur's most magnificent saloon—
While, here and there, a solitary star
Flush'd in the darkening firmament of June;
And silence brought the soul-felt hour, full soon,
Ineffable, which I may not portray;
For never did the hymenean moon
A paradise of hearts more sacred sway,
In all that slept beneath her soft voluptuous ray.

PART III

I

O Love! in such a wilderness as this,
Where transport and security entwine,
Here is the empire of thy perfect bliss,
And here thou art a god indeed divine.
Here shall no forms abridge, no hours confine,
The views, the walks, that boundless joy inspire!
Roll on, ye days of raptured influence, shine!
Nor, blind with ecstasy's celestial fire,
Shall love behold the spark of earth-born time expire.

II

Three little moons, how short, amidst the grove
And pastoral savannas they consume!
While she, beside her buskin'd youth to rove,
Delights, in fancifully wild costume,
Her lovely brow to shade with Indian plume;
And forth in hunter-seeming vest they fare;
But not to chase the deer in forest gloom,
'Tis but the breath of heaven—the blessed air—
And interchange of hearts, unknown, unseen, to share.

III

What though the sportive dog oft round them note,
Or fawn, or wild bird bursting on the wing;
Yet who, in Love's own presence, would devote
To death those gentle throats that wake the spring,

Or writhing from the brook its victim bring?
No!—nor let fear one little warbler rouse;
But, fed by Gertrude's hand, still let them sing,
Acquaintance of her path, amidst the boughs,
That shade ev'n now her love, and witness'd first her vows.

IV

Now labyrinths, which but themselves can pierce,
Methinks, conduct them to some pleasant ground,
Where welcome hills shut out the universe,
And pines their lawny walk encompass round;
There, if a pause delicious converse found,
'Twas but when o'er each heart th' idea stole,
(Perchance a while in joy's oblivion drown'd),
That come what may, while life's glad pulses roll,
Indissolubly thus should soul be knit to soul.

V

And, in the visions of romantic youth,
What years of endless bliss are yet to flow!
But mortal pleasure, what art thou in truth?
The torrent's smoothness, ere it dash below.
And must I change my song? and must I show,
Sweet Wyoming! the day when thou wert doom'd,
Guiltless, to mourn thy loveliest bowers laid low!
When, where of yesterday a garden bloom'd,
Death overspread his pall, and blackening ashes gloom'd!

VI

Sad was the year, by proud oppression driven,
When Transatlantic Liberty arose,
Not in the sunshine and the smile of heaven,
But wrapt in whirlwinds, and begirt with woes,

Amidst the strife of fratricidal foes ;
Her birth-star was the light of burning plains ;
Her baptism is the weight of blood that flows
From kindred hearts—the blood of British veins—
And famine tracks her steps, and pestilential pains.

VII

Yet, ere the storm of death had raged remote,
Or siege unseen in heaven reflects its beams,
Who now each dreadful circumstance shall note,
That fills pale Gertrude's thoughts, and nightly dreams ?
Dismal to her the forge of battle gleams
Portentous light ! and music's voice is dumb ;
Save where the fife its shrill reveillé screams,
Or midnight streets re-echo to the drum,
That speaks of maddening strife, and bloodstain'd fields to come.

VIII

It was in truth a momentary pang ;
Yet how comprising myriad shapes of woe !
First when in Gertrude's ear the summons rang,
A husband to the battle doom'd to go !
" Nay meet not thou " (she cried) " thy kindred foe !
But peaceful let us seek fair England's strand ! "
" Ah, Gertrude ! thy beloved heart, I know,
Would feel like mine the stigmatizing brand !
Could I forsake the cause of Freedom's holy band !

IX

" But shame—but flight—a recreant's name to prove,
To hide in exile ignominious fears ;
Say, ev'n if this I brook'd, the public love
Thy father's bosom to his home endears :

And how could I his few remaining years,
My Gertrude, sever from so dear a child?"
So, day by day, her boding heart he cheers:
At last that heart to hope is half beguiled,
And pale, through tears suppress'd, the mournful beauty smiled.

X

Night came,—and in their lighted bower, full late,
The joy of converse had endured—when, hark!
Abrupt and loud, a summons shook their gate;
And heedless of the dog's obstrep'rous bark,
A form had rush'd amidst them from the dark,
And spread his arms,—and fell upon the floor:
Of aged strength his limbs retain'd the mark;
But desolate he look'd, and famish'd poor,
As ever shipwreck'd wretch lone left on desert shore.

XI

Uprisen,—each wondering brow is knit and arch'd:
A spirit from the dead they deem him first:
To speak he tries; but quivering, pale, and parch'd,
From lips, as by some powerless dream accursed,
Emotions unintelligible burst;
And long his filmed eye is red and dim;
At length the pity-proffer'd cup his thirst
Had half assuaged, and nerved his shuddering limb,
When Albert's hand he grasp'd;—but Albert knew not him—

XII

"And hast thou then forgot," (he cried forlorn,
And eyed the group with half indignant air),
"Oh! hast thou, Christian chief, forgot the morn
When I with thee the cup of peace did share?

Then stately was this head, and dark this hair,
That now is white as Appalachia's snow;
But, if the weight of fifteen years' despair,
And age hath bow'd me, and the torturing foe,
Bring me my boy—and he will his deliverer know!"—

XIII

It was not long, with eyes and heart of flame,
Ere Henry to his loved Oneyda flew:
"Bless thee, my guide!"—but backward, as he came,
The chief his old bewilder'd head withdrew,
And grasp'd his arm, and look'd and look'd him through,
'Twas strange—nor could the group a smile controul—
The long, the doubtful scrutiny to view:—
At last delight o'er all his features stole,
"It is—my own," he cried, and clasp'd him to his soul.

XIV

"Yes! thou recall'st my pride of years, for then
The bowstring of my spirit was not slack,
When, spite of woods, and floods, and ambush'd men,
I bore thee like the quiver on my back,
Fleet as the whirlwind hurries on the rack;
Nor foeman then, nor cougar's crouch I fear'd,
For I was strong as mountain cataract:
And dost thou not remember how we cheer'd,
Upon the last hill-top, when white men's huts appear'd?

XV

"Then welcome be my death-song, and my death!
Since I have seen thee, and again embraced."
And longer had he spent his toil-worn breath;
But with affectionate and eager haste

Was every arm outstretch'd around their guest,
To welcome and to bless his aged head.
Soon was the hospitable banquet placed;
And Gertrude's lovely hands a balsam shed
On wounds with fever'd joy that more profusely bled.

XVI

"But this is not a time,"—he started up,
And smote his breast with woe-denouncing hand—
"This is no time to fill the joyous cup,
The Mammoth comes, — the foe, — the Monster Brandt,—
With all his howling desolating band;—
These eyes have seen their blade and burning pine
Awake at once, and silence half your land.
Red is the cup they drink; but not with wine:
Awake, and watch to-night, or see no morning shine!

XVII

"Scorning to wield the hatchet for his bribe,
'Gainst Brandt himself I went to battle forth:
Accursed Brandt! he left of all my tribe
Nor man, nor child, nor thing of living birth:
No! not the dog that watch'd my household hearth
Escaped, that night of blood, upon our plains!
All perish'd!—I alone am left on earth!
To whom nor relative nor blood remains,
No!—not a kindred drop that runs in human veins!

XVIII

"But go!—and rouse your warriors;—for, if right
These old bewilder'd eyes could guess, by signs
Of striped and starrèd banners, on yon height
Of eastern cedars, o'er the creek of pines—

Some fort embattled by your country shines:
Deep roars th' innavigable gulf below
Its squared rock, and palisaded lines.
Go! seek the light its warlike beacons show;
Whilst I in ambush wait, for vengeance, and the foe!"

XIX

Scarce had he utter'd—when Heaven's verge extreme
Reverberates the bomb's descending star,—
And sounds that mingled laugh,—and shout,—and scream,—
To freeze the blood, in one discordant jar,
Rung to the pealing thunderbolts of war.
Whoop after whoop with rack the ear assail'd;
As if unearthly fiends had burst their bar;
While rapidly the marksman's shot prevail'd:—
And aye, as if for death, some lonely trumpet wail'd.

XX

Then look'd they to the hills, where fire o'erhung
The bandit groups, in one Vesuvian glare;
Or swept, far seen, the tower, whose clock unrung
Told legible that midnight of despair.
She faints, she falters not, th' heroic fair,
As he the sword and plume in haste array'd.
One short embrace—he clasp'd his dearest care—
But hark! what nearer war-drum shakes the glade?
Joy, joy! Columbia's friends are trampling through the shade!

XXI

Then came of every race the mingled swarm,
Far rung the groves and gleam'd the midnight grass,
With flambeau, javelin, and naked arm;
As warriors wheel'd their culverins of brass,

Sprung from the woods, a bold athletic mass,
Whom virtue fires, and liberty combines:
And first the wild Moravian yagers pass,
His plumed host the dark Iberian joins—
And Scotia's sword beneath the Highland thistle shines.

XXII

And in, the buskin'd hunters of the deer,
To Albert's home, with shout and cymbal throng:—
Roused by their warlike pomp, and mirth, and cheer,
Old Outalissi woke his battle-song,
And, beating with his war-club cadence strong,
Tells how his deep-stung indignation smarts,
Of them that wrapt his house in flames, ere long,
To whet a dagger on their stony hearts,
And smile avenged ere yet his eagle spirit parts.—

XXIII

Calm, opposite the Christian father rose,
Pale on his venerable brow its rays
Of martyr light the conflagration throws;
One hand upon his lovely child he lays,
And one the uncover'd crowd to silence sways;
While, though the battle flash is faster driven,—
Unaw'd, with eye unstartled by the blaze,
He for his bleeding country prays to Heaven,—
Prays that the men of blood themselves may be forgiven.

XXIV

Short time is now for gratulating speech:
And yet, beloved Gertrude, ere began
Thy country's flight, yon distant towers to reach,
Look'd not on thee the rudest partisan

With brow relax'd to love? And murmurs ran,
As round and round their willing ranks they drew,
From beauty's sight to shield the hostile van.
Grateful, on them a placid look she threw,
Nor wept, but as she bade her mother's grave adieu!

XXV

Past was the flight, and welcome seem'd the tower,
That like a giant standard-bearer frown'd
Defiance on the roving Indian power.
Beneath, each bold and promontory mound
With embrasure emboss'd, and armour crown'd,
And arrowy frise, and wedgèd ravelin,
Wove like a diadem its tracery round
The lofty summit of that mountain green;
Here stood secure the group, and eyed a distant scene—

XXVI

A scene of death! where fires beneath the sun,
And blended arms, and white pavilions glow;
And for the business of destruction done,
Its requiem the war-horn seem'd to blow:
There, sad spectatress of her country's woe!
The lovely Gertrude, safe from present harm,
Had laid her cheek, and clasp'd her hands of snow
On Waldegrave's shoulder, half within his arm
Enclosed, that felt her heart, and hush'd its wild alarm!

XXVII

But short that contemplation—sad and short
The pause to bid each much-loved scene adieu!
Beneath the very shadow of the fort,
Where friendly swords were drawn, and banners flew,

Ah! who could deem that foot of Indian crew
Was near?—yet there, with lust of murd'rous deeds,
Gleam'd like a basilisk, from woods in view,
The ambush'd foeman's eye—his volley speeds,
And Albert—Albert falls! the dear old father bleeds!

XXVIII

And tranced in giddy horror Gertrude swoon'd;
Yet, while she clasps him lifeless to her zone,
Say, burst they, borrow'd from her father's wound,
These drops?—O God! the life-blood is her own!
And faltering, on her Waldegrave's bosom thrown—
"Weep not, O Love!"—she cries, "to see me bleed—
Thee, Gertrude's sad survivor, thee alone
Heaven's peace commiserate; for scarce I heed
These wounds;—yet thee to leave is death, is death indeed!

XXIX

"Clasp me a little longer on the brink
Of fate! while I can feel thy dear caress;
And when this heart hath ceased to beat—oh! think,
And let it mitigate thy woe's excess,
That thou hast been to me all tenderness,
And friend to more than human friendship just.
Oh! by that retrospect of happiness,
And by the hopes of an immortal trust,
God shall assuage thy pangs—when I am laid in dust!

XXX

"Go, Henry, go not back, when I depart,—
The scene thy bursting tears too deep will move,—
Where my dear father took thee to his heart,
And Gertrude thought it ecstasy to rove

With thee, as with an angel, through the grove
Of peace, imagining her lot was cast
In heaven ; for ours was not like earthly love.
And must this parting be our very last?
No ! I shall love thee still, when death itself is past.—

XXXI

"Half could I bear, methinks, to leave this earth,—
And thee, more loved than aught beneath the sun,
If I had lived to smile but on the birth
Of one dear pledge ;—but shall there then be none,
In future times—no gentle little one,
To clasp thy neck, and look, resembling me?
Yet seems it, ev'n while life's last pulses run,
A sweetness in the cup of death to be,
Lord of my bosom's love ! to die beholding thee !"

XXXII

Hush'd were his Gertrude's lips ! but still their bland
And beautiful expression seem'd to melt
With love that could not die ! and still his hand
She presses to the heart no more that felt.
Ah, heart ! where once each fond affection dwelt,
And features yet that spoke a soul more fair.
Mute, gazing, agonizing, as he knelt,—
Of them that stood encircling his despair,
He heard some friendly words ;—but knew not what they were.

XXXIII

For now, to mourn their judge and child, arrives
A faithful band. With solemn rites between,
'Twas sung, how they were lovely in their lives,
And in their deaths had not divided been.

Touch'd by the music, and the melting scene,
Was scarce one tearless eye amidst the crowd :—
Stern warriors, resting on their swords, were seen
To veil their eyes, as pass'd each much-loved shroud—
While woman's softer soul in woe dissolved aloud.

XXXIV

Then mournfully the parting bugle bid
Its farewell, o'er the grave of worth and truth ;
Prone to the dust, afflicted Waldegrave hid
His face on earth ;—him watch'd, in gloomy ruth,
His woodland guide ; but words had none to soothe
The grief that knew not consolation's name :
Casting his Indian mantle o'er the youth,
He watch'd, beneath its folds, each burst that came
Convulsive, ague-like, across his shuddering frame !

XXXV

" And I could weep ; "—th' Oneyda chief
His descant wildly thus begun :
" But that I may not stain with grief
The death-song of my father's son,
Or bow this head in woe !
For by my wrongs, and by my wrath !
To-morrow Areouski's breath,
(That fires yon heaven with storms of death),
Shall light us to the foe :
And we shall share, my Christian boy !
The foeman's blood, the avenger's joy !

XXXVI

" But thee, my flower, whose breath was given
By milder genii o'er the deep,

The spirits of the white man's heaven
Forbid not thee to weep :—
Nor will the Christian host,
Nor will thy father's spirit grieve,
To see thee, on the battle's eve,
Lamenting, take a mournful leave
Of her who loved thee most :
She was the rainbow to thy sight !
Thy sun—thy heaven—of lost delight !

XXXVII

" To-morrow let us do or die !
But when the bolt of death is hurl'd,
Ah ! whither then with thee to fly,
Shall Outalissi roam the world ?
Seek we thy once-loved home ?
The hand is gone that cropt its flowers :
Unheard their clock repeats its hours !
Cold is the hearth within their bowers !
And should we thither roam,
Its echoes, and its empty tread,
Would sound like voices from the dead !

XXXVIII

" Or shall we cross yon mountains blue,
Whose streams my kindred nation quaff'd,
And by my side, in battle true,
A thousand warriors drew the shaft ?
Ah ! there, in desolation cold,
The desert serpent dwells alone,
Where grass o'ergrows each mouldering bone,
And stones themselves to ruin grown,
Like me, are death-like old.
Then seek we not their camp,—for there
The silence dwells of my despair !

XXXIX

"But hark, the trump !—to-morrow thou
In glory's fires shalt dry thy tears :
Ev'n from the land of shadows now
My father's awful ghost appears,
Amidst the clouds that round us roll ;
He bids my soul for battle thirst—
He bids me dry the last—the first—
The only tears that ever burst
From Outalissi's soul ;
Because I may not stain with grief
The death-song of an Indian chief !"

1809.

O'CONNOR'S CHILD;

OR

"THE FLOWER OF LOVE LIES BLEEDING"

O'CONNOR'S CHILD;

OR,

"THE FLOWER OF LOVE LIES BLEEDING"

I

Oh! once the harp of Innisfail
Was strung full high to notes of gladness;
But yet it often told a tale
Of more prevailing sadness.
Sad was the note, and wild its fall,
As winds that moan at night forlorn
Along the isles of Fion-Gall,
When, for O'Connor's child to mourn,
The harper told, how lone, how far
From any mansion's twinkling star,
From any path of social men,
Or voice, but from the fox's den,
The lady in the desert dwelt;
And yet no wrongs, no fear she felt:
Say, why should dwell in place so wild,
O'Connor's pale and lovely child?

II

Sweet lady! she no more inspires
Green Erin's hearts with beauty's power,

As, in the palace of her sires,
She bloom'd a peerless flower.
Gone from her hand and bosom, gone,
The royal broche, the jewell'd ring,
That o'er her dazzling whiteness shone,
Like dews on lilies of the spring.
Yet why, though fall'n her brothers' kerne,
Beneath De Bourgo's battle stern,
While yet, in Leinster unexplored,
Her friends survive the English sword ;
Why lingers she from Erin's host,
So far on Galway's shipwreck'd coast ;
Why wanders she a huntress wild—
O'Connor's pale and lovely child ?

III

And, fix'd on empty space, why burn
Her eyes with momentary wildness ;
And wherefore do they then return
To more than woman's mildness ?
Dishevell'd are her raven locks ;
On Connocht Moran's name she calls ;
And oft amidst the lonely rocks
She sings sweet madrigals.
Placed 'midst the fox-glove and the moss,
Behold a parted warrior's cross !
That is the spot where, evermore,
The lady, at her shieling door,
Enjoys that, in communion sweet,
The living and the dead can meet,
For, lo ! to love-lorn fantasy,
The hero of her heart is nigh.

IV

Bright as the bow that spans the storm,
In Erin's yellow vesture clad,
A son of light—a lovely form,
He comes and makes her glad ;
Now on the grass-green turf he sits,
His tassell'd horn beside him laid ;
Now o'er the hills in chase he flits,
The hunter and the deer a shade !
Sweet mourner ! these are shadows vain
That cross the twilight of her brain ;
Yet she will tell you, she is blest,
Of Connocht Moran's tomb possess'd,
More richly than in Aghrim's bower,
When bards high praised her beauty's power,
And kneeling pages offer'd up
The mórat in a golden cup.

V

"A hero's bride ! this desert bower,
It ill befits thy gentle breeding :
And wherefore dost thou love this flower
To call—'My love lies bleeding?'"
"This purple flower my tears have nursed ;
A hero's blood supplied its bloom :
I love it, for it was the first
That grew on Connocht Moran's tomb.
Oh ! hearken, stranger, to my voice !
This desert mansion is my choice !
And blest, though fatal, be the star
That led me to its wilds afar :
For here these pathless mountains free
Gave shelter to my love and me ;

And every rock and every stone
Bear witness that he was my own.

VI

"O'Connor's child, I was the bud
Of Erin's royal tree of glory;
But woe to them that wrapt in blood
The tissue of my story!
Still as I clasp my burning brain,
A death-scene rushes on my sight;
It rises o'er and o'er again,
The bloody feud—the fatal night,
When, chafing Connocht Moran's scorn,
They call'd my hero basely born;
And bade him choose a meaner bride
Than from O'Connor's house of pride.
Their tribe, they said, their high degree,
Was sung in Tara's psaltery;
Witness their Eath's victorious brand,
And Cathal of the bloody hand;
Glory (they said) and power and honour
Were in the mansion of O'Connor:
But he, my loved one, bore in field
A humbler crest, a meaner shield.

VII

"Ah, brothers! what did it avail,
That fiercely and triumphantly
Ye fought the English of the Pale,
And stemm'd De Bourgo's chivalry!
And what was it to love and me,
That barons by your standard rode;
Or beal-fires for your jubilee
Upon a hundred mountains glow'd?

What though the lords of tower and dome
From Shannon to the North-sea foam,—
Thought ye your iron hands of pride
Could break the knot that love had tied?
No:—let the eagle change his plume,
The leaf its hue, the flower its bloom;
But ties around this heart were spun,
That could not, would not, be undone!

VIII

"At bleating of the wild watch-fold
Thus sang my love—'Oh, come with me:
Our bark is on the lake, behold
Our steeds are fasten'd to the tree.
Come far from Castle-Connor's clans:—
Come with thy belted forestere,
And I, beside the lake of swans,
Shall hunt for thee the fallow-deer;
And build thy hut, and bring thee home
The wild-fowl and the honey-comb;
And berries from the wood provide,
And play my clarshech by thy side.
Then come, my love!'—How could I stay?
Our nimble stag-hounds track'd the way,
And I pursued, by moonless skies,
The light of Connocht Moran's eyes.

IX

"And fast and far, before the star
Of day-spring, rush'd we through the glade,
And saw at dawn the lofty bawn
Of Castle-Connor fade.
Sweet was to us the hermitage
Of this unplough'd, untrodden shore;

Like birds all joyous from the cage,
For man's neglect we loved it more ;
And well he knew, my huntsman dear,
To search the game with hawk and spear ;
While I, his evening food to dress,
Would sing to him in happiness.
But, oh, that midnight of despair !
When I was doom'd to rend my hair :
The night, to me, of shrieking sorrow !
The night, to him, that had no morrow !

X

"When all was hush'd, at even tide,
I heard the baying of their beagle :
Be hush'd ! my Connocht Moran cried,
'Tis but the screaming of the eagle.
Alas ! 'twas not the eyrie's sound ;
Their bloody bands had track'd us out :
Up-listening starts our couchant hound—
And, hark ! again, that nearer shout
Brings faster on the murderers.
Spare—spare him—Brazil—Desmond fierce !
In vain—no voice the adder charms ;
Their weapons cross'd my sheltering arms :
Another's sword has laid him low—
Another's and another's ;
And every hand that dealt the blow—
Ah me ! it was a brother's !
Yes, when his moanings died away,
Their iron hands had dug the clay,
And o'er his burial turf they trod,
And I beheld—O God ! O God !—
His life-blood oozing from the sod.

XI

"Warm in his death-wounds sepulchred,
Alas! my warrior's spirit brave
Nor mass nor ulla-lulla heard,
Lamenting, soothe his grave.
Dragg'd to their hated mansion back,
How long in thraldom's grasp I lay
I knew not, for my soul was black,
And knew no change of night or day.
One night of horror round me grew;
Or if I saw, or felt, or knew,
'Twas but when those grim visages,
The angry brothers of my race,
Glared on each eye-ball's aching throb,
And check'd my bosom's power to sob,
Or when my heart with pulses drear
Beat like a death-watch to my ear.

XII

"But Heaven, at last, my soul's eclipse
Did with a vision bright inspire:
I woke and felt upon my lips
A prophetess's fire.
Thrice in the east a war-drum beat,
I heard the Saxon's trumpet sound,
And ranged, as to the judgment-seat,
My guilty, trembling brothers round.
Clad in the helm and shield they came;
For now De Bourgo's sword and flame
Had ravaged Ulster's boundaries,
And lighted up the midnight skies.
The standard of O'Connor's sway
Was in the turret where I lay;

That standard, with so dire a look,
As ghastly shone the moon and pale,
I gave,—that every bosom shook
Beneath its iron mail.

XIII

"'And go,' I cried, 'the combat seek,
Ye hearts that unappalled bore
The anguish of a sister's shriek,
Go !—and return no more !
For sooner guilt the ordeal brand
Shall grasp unhurt, than ye shall hold
The banner with victorious hand,
Beneath a sister's curse unroll'd.'
O stranger ! by my country's loss !
And by my love ! and by the cross !
I swear I never could have spoke
The curse that sever'd nature's yoke,
But that a spirit o'er me stood,
And fired me with the wrathful mood ;
And frenzy to my heart was given,
To speak the malison of heaven.

XIV

"They would have cross'd themselves, all mute ;
They would have pray'd to burst the spell ;
But at the stamping of my foot
Each hand down powerless fell !
'And go to Athunree !' I cried ;
'High lift the banner of your pride !
But know that where its sheet unrolls,
The weight of blood is on your souls !
Go where the havoc of your kerne
Shall float as high as mountain fern !

Men shall no more your mansion know ;
The nettles on your hearth shall grow !
Dead, as the green oblivious flood
That mantles by your walls, shall be
The glory of O'Connor's blood !
Away ! away to Athunree !
Where, downward when the sun shall fall,
The raven's wing shall be your pall !
And not a vassal shall unlace
The vizor from your dying face !'

XV

"A bolt that overhung our dome
Suspended till my curse was given,
Soon as it pass'd these lips of foam,
Peal'd in the blood-red heaven.
Dire was the look that o'er their backs
The angry parting brothers threw :
But now, behold ! like cataracts,
Come down the hills in view
O'Connor's plumed partisans ;
Thrice ten Kilnagorvian clans
Were marching to their doom :
A sudden storm their plumage toss'd,
A flash of lightning o'er them cross'd,
And all again was gloom !

XVI

"Stranger ! I fled the home of grief,
At Connocht Moran's tomb to fall ;
I found the helmet of my chief,
His bow still hanging on our wall,
And took it down, and vow'd to rove
This desert place a huntress bold ;
Nor would I change my buried love

For any heart of living mould.
No! for I am a hero's child;
I'll hunt my quarry in the wild;
And still my home this mansion make,
Of all unheeded and unheeding,
And cherish, for my warrior's sake—
'The flower of love lies bleeding.'"

1810.

POEMS, 1809–1836

LYRICS

FIELD FLOWERS

Ye field flowers ! the gardens eclipse you, 'tis true ;
Yet, wildings of Nature, I doat upon you,
For ye waft me to summers of old,
When the earth teem'd around me with fairy delight,
And when daisies and buttercups gladden'd my sight,
Like treasures of silver and gold.

I love you for lulling me back into dreams
Of the blue Highland mountains and echoing streams,
And of birchen glades breathing their balm,
While the deer was seen glancing in sunshine remote,
And the deep mellow crush of the wood-pigeon's note
Made music that sweeten'd the calm.

Not a pastoral song has a pleasanter tune
Than ye speak to my heart, little wildings of June :
Of old ruinous castles ye tell,
Where I thought it delightful your beauties to find,
When the magic of Nature first breathed on my mind,
And your blossoms were part of her spell.

Even now what affections the violet awakes ;
What loved little islands, twice seen in their lakes,
Can the wild water-lily restore ;
What landscapes I read in the primrose's looks,
And what pictures of pebbled and minnowy brooks,
In the vetches that tangled their shore.

Earth's cultureless buds, to my heart ye were dear,
Ere the fever of passion, or ague of fear,
Had scathed my existence's bloom;
Once I welcome you more, in life's passionless stage,
With the visions of youth to revisit my age;
And I wish you to grow on my tomb.

1826.

TO THE RAINBOW

TRIUMPHAL arch, that fill'st the sky
When storms prepare to part,
I ask not proud Philosophy
To teach me what thou art.—

Still seem, as to my childhood's sight,
A midway station given
For happy spirits to alight
Betwixt the earth and heaven.

Can all that Optics teach, unfold
Thy form to please me so,
As when I dreamt of gems and gold
Hid in thy radiant bow?

When Science from Creation's face
Enchantment's veil withdraws,
What lovely visions yield their place
To cold material laws!

And yet, fair bow, no fabling dreams,
But words of the Most High,
Have told why first thy robe of beams
Was woven in the sky.

When o'er the green undeluged earth
Heaven's covenant thou didst shine,
How came the world's grey fathers forth
To watch thy sacred sign!

And when its yellow lustre smiled
O'er mountains yet untrod,
Each mother held aloft her child
To bless the bow of God.

Methinks thy jubilee to keep
The first-made anthem rang
On earth deliver'd from the deep,
And the first poet sang.

Nor ever shall the Muse's eye
Unraptured greet thy beam:
Theme of primeval prophecy,
Be still the prophet's theme!

The earth to thee her incense yields,
The lark thy welcome sings,
When glittering in the freshen'd fields
The snowy mushroom springs.

How glorious is thy girdle, cast
O'er mountain, tower, and town,
Or mirror'd in the ocean vast,
A thousand fathoms down!

As fresh in yon horizon dark,
As young thy beauties seem
As when the eagle from the ark
First sported in thy beam:

For, faithful to its sacred page,
Heaven still rebuilds thy span,
Nor lets the type grow pale with age
That first spoke peace to man.

1819.

SONG

TO THE EVENING STAR

STAR that bringest home the bee,
And sett'st the weary labourer free!
If any star shed peace, 'tis thou,
That send'st it from above,
Appearing when Heaven's breath and brow
Are sweet as hers we love.

Come to the luxuriant skies,
Whilst the landscape's odours rise,
Whilst far-off lowing herds are heard,
And songs when toil is done,
From cottages whose smoke unstirr'd
Curls yellow in the sun.

Star of love's soft interviews,
Parted lovers on thee muse;
Their remembrancer in Heaven
Of thrilling vows thou art,
Too delicious to be riven
By absence from the heart.

1821.

A DREAM

WELL may sleep present us fictions,
Since our waking moments teem
With such fanciful convictions
As make life itself a dream.—
Half our daylight faith 's a fable ;
Sleep disports with shadows too,
Seeming in their turn as stable
As the world we wake to view.
Ne'er by day did Reason's mint
Give my thoughts a clearer print
Of assured reality,
Than was left by Phantasy
Stamp'd and colour'd on my sprite,
In a dream of yesternight.

In a bark, methought, lone steering,
I was cast on Ocean's strife ;
This, 'twas whisper'd in my hearing,
Meant the sea of life.
Sad regrets from past existence
Came, like gales of chilling breath ;
Shadow'd in the forward distance
Lay the land of Death.
Now seeming more, now less remote,
On that dim-seen shore, methought,
I beheld two hands a space
Slow unshroud a spectre's face ;
And my flesh's hair upstood,—
'Twas mine own similitude.

But my soul revived at seeing
Ocean, like an emerald spark,

Kindle, while an air-dropt being
Smiling steer'd my bark.
Heaven-like—yet he look'd as human
As supernal beauty can,
More compassionate than woman,
Lordly more than man.
And as some sweet clarion's breath
Stirs the soldier's scorn of death—
So his accents bade me brook
The spectre's eyes of icy look,
Till it shut them—turn'd its head,
Like a beaten foe, and fled.

"Types not this," I said, "fair spirit!
That my death hour is not come?
Say, what days shall I inherit?—
Tell my soul their sum."
"No," he said, "yon phantom's aspect,
Trust me, would appal thee worse,
Held in clearly measured prospect:—
Ask not for a curse!
Make not, for I overhear
Thine unspoken thoughts as clear
As thy mortal ear could catch
The close-brought tickings of a watch—
Make not the untold request
That 's now revolving in thy breast.

"'Tis to live again, remeasuring
Youth's years, like a scene rehearsed,
In thy second life-time treasuring
Knowledge from the first.
Hast thou felt, poor self-deceiver!
Life's career so void of pain,
As to wish its fitful fever
New begun again?

Could experience, ten times thine,
Pain from Being disentwine—
Threads by Fate together spun?
Could thy flight Heaven's lightning shun?
No, nor could thy foresight's glance
'Scape the myriad shafts of Chance.

"Wouldst thou bear again Love's trouble—
Friendship's death-dissever'd ties;
Toil to grasp or miss the bubble
Of Ambition's prize?
Say thy life's new guided action
Flow'd from Virtue's fairest springs—
Still would Envy and Detraction
Double not their stings?
Worth itself is but a charter
To be mankind's distinguish'd martyr."
—I caught the moral, and cried, "Hail!
Spirit! let us onward sail
Envying, fearing, hating none—
Guardian Spirit, steer me on!"

1824.

THE LAST MAN

All worldly shapes shall melt in gloom,
The Sun himself must die,
Before this mortal shall assume
Its Immortality!

I saw a vision in my sleep,
That gave my spirit strength to sweep
Adown the gulf of Time!
I saw the last of human mould,
That shall Creation's death behold,
As Adam saw her prime!

The Sun's eye had a sickly glare,
The Earth with age was wan,
The skeletons of nations were
Around that lonely man!
Some had expired in fight,—the brands
Still rusted in their bony hands;
In plague and famine some!
Earth's cities had no sound nor tread;
And ships were drifting with the dead
To shores where all was dumb!

Yet, prophet-like, that lone one stood,
With dauntless words and high,
That shook the sere leaves from the wood
As if a storm pass'd by,
Saying, We are twins in death, proud Sun!
Thy face is cold, thy race is run,
'Tis Mercy bids thee go:
For thou ten thousand thousand years
Hast seen the tide of human tears,
That shall no longer flow.

What though beneath thee man put forth
His pomp, his pride, his skill;
And arts that made fire, flood, and earth,
The vassals of his will?—
Yet mourn I not thy parted sway,
Thou dim discrowned king of day:

For all those trophied arts
And triumphs that beneath thee sprang,
Heal'd not a passion or a pang
Entail'd on human hearts.

Go, let Oblivion's curtain fall
Upon the stage of men,
Nor with thy rising beams recall
Life's tragedy again:
Its piteous pageants bring not back,
Nor waken flesh, upon the rack
Of pain anew to writhe;
Stretch'd in disease's shapes abhorr'd,
Or mown in battle by the sword,
Like grass beneath the scythe.

Ev'n I am weary in yon skies
To watch thy fading fire;
Test of all sumless agonies,
Behold not me expire.
My lips that speak thy dirge of death—
Their rounded gasp and gurgling breath
To see thou shalt not boast.
The eclipse of Nature spreads my pall,—
The majesty of Darkness shall
Receive my parting ghost!

This spirit shall return to Him
Who gave its heavenly spark;
Yet think not, Sun, it shall be dim
When thou thyself art dark!
No! it shall live again, and shine
In bliss unknown to beams of thine,
By Him recall'd to breath,
Who captive led Captivity,

Who robb'd the grave of Victory,—
And took the sting from Death!

Go, Sun, while Mercy holds me up
On Nature's awful waste
To drink this last and bitter cup
Of grief that man shall taste—
Go, tell the Night that hides thy face,
Thou saw'st the last of Adam's race,
On Earth's sepulchral clod,
The darkening universe defy
To quench his Immortality,
Or shake his trust in God!

1823.

ABSENCE

'Tis not the loss of love's assurance,
It is not doubting what thou art,
But 'tis the too, too long endurance
Of absence, that afflicts my heart.

The fondest thoughts two hearts can cherish,
When each is lonely doom'd to weep,
Are fruits on desert isles that perish,
Or riches buried in the deep.

What though, untouch'd by jealous madness,
Our bosom's peace may fall to wreck;
Th' undoubting heart, that breaks with sadness,
Is but more slowly doom'd to break.

Absence ! is not the soul torn by it
From more than light, or life, or breath ?
'Tis Lethe's gloom, but not its quiet,—
The pain without the peace of death !

1821.

HALLOWED GROUND

WHAT's hallow'd ground ? Has earth a clod
Its Maker meant not should be trod
By man, the image of his God,
Erect and free,
Unscourged by Superstition's rod
To bow the knee ?

That's hallow'd ground—where, mourn'd and miss'd,
The lips repose our love has kiss'd ;—
But where 's their memory's mansion ? Is't
Yon churchyard's bowers ?
No ! in ourselves their souls exist,
A part of ours.

A kiss can consecrate the ground
Where mated hearts are mutual bound :
The spot where love's first links were wound,
That ne'er are riven,
Is hallow'd down to earth's profound,
And up to heaven !

For time makes all but true love old ;
The burning thoughts that then were told

Run molten still in memory's mould ;
And will not cool,
Until the heart itself be cold
In Lethe's pool.

What hallows ground where heroes sleep ?
'Tis not the sculptured piles you heap !
In dews that heavens far distant weep
Their turf may bloom ;
Or Genii twine beneath the deep
Their coral tomb :

But strew his ashes to the wind
Whose sword or voice has served mankind—
And is he dead, whose glorious mind
Lifts thine on high ?—
To live in hearts we leave behind,
Is not to die.

Is't death to fall for Freedom's right ?
He 's dead alone that lacks her light !
And murder sullies in Heaven's sight
The sword he draws :—
What can alone ennoble fight ?
A noble cause !

Give that ! and welcome War to brace
Her drums ! and rend Heaven's reeking space !
The colours planted face to face,
The charging cheer,
Though Death's pale horse lead on the chase,
Shall still be dear.

And place our trophies where men kneel
To Heaven !—but Heaven rebukes my zeal.
The cause of Truth and human weal,

O God above!
Transfer it from the sword's appeal
To Peace and Love.

Peace, Love! the cherubim, that join
Their spread wings o'er Devotion's shrine,
Prayers sound in vain, and temples shine,
Where they are not—
The heart alone can make divine
Religion's spot.

To incantations dost thou trust,
And pompous rites in domes august?
See mouldering stones and metal's rust
Belie the vaunt,
That man can bless one pile of dust
With chime or chaunt.

The ticking wood-worm mocks thee, man!
Thy temples—creeds themselves, grow wan!
But there's a dome of nobler span,
A temple given
Thy faith, that bigots dare not ban—
Its space is Heaven!

Its roof star-pictured Nature's ceiling,
Where, trancing the rapt spirit's feeling,
And God himself to man revealing,
The harmonious spheres
Make music, though unheard their pealing
By mortal ears.

Fair stars! are not your beings pure?
Can sin, can death your worlds obscure?
Else why so swell the thoughts at your

Aspect above?
Ye must be Heavens that make us sure
Of heavenly love!

And in your harmony sublime
I read the doom of distant time;
That man's regenerate soul from crime
Shall yet be drawn,
And reason on his mortal clime
Immortal dawn.

What's hallow'd ground? 'Tis what gives birth
To sacred thoughts in souls of worth!—
Peace! Independence! Truth! go forth
Earth's compass round;
And your high-priesthood shall make earth
All hallow'd ground.

1825

LINES

ON A PICTURE OF A GIRL IN THE ATTITUDE OF PRAYER

By the Artist Greuze, in the possession of Lady Stepney

Was man e'er doom'd that beauty made
By mimic art should haunt him;
Like Orpheus, I adore a shade,
And dote upon a phantom.

Thou maid that in my inmost thought
Art fancifully sainted,
Why liv'st thou not—why art thou nought
But canvas sweetly painted?

Whose looks seem lifted to the skies,
  Too pure for love of mortals—
As if they drew angelic eyes
  To greet thee at heaven's portals.

Yet loveliness has here no grace
  Abstracted or ideal—
Art ne'er but from a living face
  Drew looks so seeming real.

What wert thou, maid?—thy life—thy name
  Oblivion hides in mystery;
Though from thy face my heart could frame
  A long romantic history.

Transported to thy time I seem,
  Though dust thy coffin covers—
And hear the songs, in fancy's dream,
  Of thy devoted lovers.

How witching must have been thy breath—
  How sweet the living charmer—
Whose every semblance after death
  Can make the heart grow warmer!

Adieu, the charms that vainly move
  My soul in their possession—
That prompt my lips to speak of love,
  Yet rob them of expression.

Yet thee, dear picture, to have praised
  Was but a poet's duty;
And shame to him that ever gazed
  Impassive on thy beauty.

1830.

SONG

When Napoleon was flying
From the field of Waterloo,
A British soldier dying
To his brother bade adieu!

"And take," he said, "this token
To the maid that owns my faith,
With the words that I have spoken
In affection's latest breath."

Sore mourn'd the brother's heart,
When the youth beside him fell;
But the trumpet warn'd to part,
And they took a sad farewell.

There was many a friend to lose him
For that gallant soldier sigh'd;
But the maiden of his bosom
Wept when all their tears were dried.

1818.

FAREWELL TO LOVE

I had a heart that doted once in passion's boundless pain,
And though the tyrant I abjured, I could not break his chain;
But now that Fancy's fire is quench'd, and ne'er can burn anew,
I've bid to Love, for all my life, adieu! adieu! adieu!

I've known, if ever mortal knew, the spells of Beauty's thrall,
And if my song has told them not, my soul has felt them all;
But Passion robs my peace no more, and Beauty's witching sway
Is now to me a star that's fall'n—a dream that's pass'd away.

Hail! welcome tide of life, when no tumultuous billows roll,
How wondrous to myself appears this halcyon calm of soul!
The wearied bird blown o'er the deep would sooner quit its shore,
Than I would cross the gulf again that time has brought me o'er.

Why say they Angels feel the flame?—O spirits of the skies!
Can love like ours, that dotes on dust, in heavenly bosoms rise?—
Ah no! the hearts that best have felt its power, the best can tell,
That peace on earth itself begins, when Love has bid farewell.

1830.

SONG

"MEN OF ENGLAND"

MEN of England! who inherit
Rights that cost your sires their blood!
Men whose undegenerate spirit
Has been proved on field and flood;

By the foes you've fought uncounted,
  By the glorious deeds ye've done,
Trophies captured—breaches mounted,
  Navies conquer'd—kingdoms won!

Yet, remember, England gathers
  Hence but fruitless wreaths of fame,
If the freedom of your fathers
  Glow not in your hearts the same.

What are monuments of bravery,
  Where no public virtues bloom?
What avail in lands of slavery,
  Trophied temples, arch, and tomb?

Pageants!—Let the world revere us
  For our people's rights and laws,
And the breasts of civic heroes
  Bared in Freedom's holy cause.

Yours are Hampden's, Russell's glory,
  Sidney's matchless shade is yours,—
Martyrs in heroic story,
  Worth a hundred Agincourts!

We're the sons of sires that baffled
  Crown'd and mitred tyranny;—
They defied the field and scaffold
  For their birthrights—so will we!

1821.

LINES

ON THE CAMP HILL, NEAR HASTINGS

In the deep blue of eve,
Ere the twinkling of stars had begun,
Or the lark took his leave
Of the skies and the sweet setting sun,

I climb'd to yon heights,
Where the Norman encamp'd him of old,
With his bowmen and knights,
And his banner all burnish'd with gold.

At the Conqueror's side
There his minstrelsy sat harp in hand,
In pavilion wide;
And they chaunted the deeds of Roland.

Still the ramparted ground
With a vision my fancy inspires,
And I hear the trump sound,
As it marshall'd our Chivalry's sires.

On each turf of that mead
Stood the captors of England's domains,
That ennobled her breed
And high-mettled the blood of her veins.

Over hauberk and helm
As the sun's setting splendour was thrown,
Thence they look'd o'er a realm—
And to-morrow beheld it their own.

1831.

BALLADS AND ROMANCES

REULLURA

STAR of the morn and eve,
Reullura shone like thee,
And well for her might Aodh grieve,
The dark-attired Culdee.
Peace to their shades! the pure Culdees
Were Albyn's earliest priests of God,
Ere yet an island of her seas
By foot of Saxon monk was trod,
Long ere her churchmen by bigotry
Were barr'd from wedlock's holy tie.
'Twas then that Aodh, famed afar,
In Iona preach'd the word with power,
And Reullura, beauty's star,
Was the partner of his bower.

But, Aodh, the roof lies low,
And the thistle-down waves bleaching,
And the bat flits to and fro
Where the Gaël once heard thy preaching;
And fall'n is each column'd aisle
Where the chiefs and the people knelt.
'Twas near that temple's goodly pile
That honoured of men they dwelt.
For Aodh was wise in the sacred law,
And bright Reullura's eyes oft saw

The veil of fate uplifted.
Alas, with what visions of awe
Her soul in that hour was gifted—
When pale in the temple and faint,
With Aodh she stood alone
By the statue of an aged Saint!
Fair sculptured was the stone,
It bore a crucifix;
Fame said it once had graced
A Christian temple, which the Picts
In the Britons' land laid waste:
The Pictish men, by St. Columb taught,
Had hither the holy relic brought.
Reullura eyed the statue's face,
And cried, "It is, he shall come,
Even he, in this very place,
To avenge my martyrdom.

"For, woe to the Gaël people!
Ulvfagre is on the main,
And Iona shall look from tower and steeple
On the coming ships of the Dane;
And, dames and daughters, shall all your locks
With the spoiler's grasp entwine?
No! some shall have shelter in caves and rocks,
And the deep sea shall be mine.
Baffled by me shall the Dane return,
And here shall his torch in the temple burn,
Until that holy man shall plough
The waves from Innisfail.
His sail is on the deep e'en now,
And swells to the southern gale."

"Ah! knowest thou not, my bride,"
The holy Aodh said,

"That the Saint whose form we stand beside
Has for ages slept with the dead?"
"He liveth, he liveth," she said again,
"For the span of his life tenfold extends
Beyond the wonted years of men.
He sits by the graves of well-loved friends
That died ere thy grandsire's grandsire's birth;
The oak is decayed with age on earth,
Whose acorn-seed had been planted by him;
And his parents remember the day of dread
When the sun on the cross look'd dim,
And the graves gave up their dead.
Yet preaching from clime to clime,
He hath roam'd the earth for ages,
And hither he shall come in time
When the wrath of the heathen rages,
In time a remnant from the sword—
Ah! but a remnant to deliver;
Yet, blest be the name of the Lord!
His martyrs shall go into bliss for ever.
Lochlin, appall'd, shall put up her steel,
And thou shalt embark on the bounding keel;
Safe shalt thou pass through her hundred ships,
With the Saint and a remnant of the Gaël,
And the Lord will instruct thy lips
To preach in Innisfail."

The sun, now about to set,
Was burning o'er Tiree,
And no gathering cry rose yet
O'er the isles of Albyn's sea,
Whilst Reullura saw far rowers dip
Their oars beneath the sun,
And the phantom of many a Danish ship,
Where ship there yet was none.

And the shield of alarm was dumb,
Nor did their warning till midnight come,
When watch-fires burst from across the main,
From Rona, and Uist, and Skye,
To tell that the ships of the Dane
And the red-hair'd slayers were nigh.

Our islemen arose from slumbers,
And buckled on their arms;
But few, alas! were their numbers
To Lochlin's mailed swarms.
And the blade of the bloody Norse
Has fill'd the shores of the Gaël
With many a floating corse,
And with many a woman's wail.
They have lighted the islands with ruin's torch,
And the holy men of Iona's church
In the temple of God lay slain,
All but Aodh, the last Culdee;
But bound with many an iron chain,
Bound in that church was he.
And where is Aodh's bride?
Rocks of the ocean flood!
Plunged she not from your heights in pride,
And mock'd the men of blood?
Then Ulvfagre and his bands
In the temple lighted their banquet up,
And the print of their blood-red hands
Was left on the altar cup.
'Twas then that the Norseman to Aodh said,
"Tell where thy church's treasure's laid,
Or I'll hew thee limb from limb."
As he spoke the bell struck three,
And every torch grew dim
That lighted their revelry.

But the torches again burnt bright,
And brighter than before,
When an aged man of majestic height
Enter'd the temple door.
Hush'd was the revellers' sound,
They were struck as mute as the dead,
And their hearts were appall'd by the very sound
Of his footsteps' measured tread.
Nor word was spoken by one beholder,
Whilst he flung his white robe back on his shoulder,
And stretching his arms—as eath
Unriveted Aodh's bands,
As if the gyves had been a wreath
Of willows in his hands.

All saw the stranger's similitude
To the ancient statue's form;
The Saint before his own image stood,
And grasp'd Ulvfagre's arm.
Then uprose the Danes at last to deliver
Their chief, and shouting with one accord,
They drew the shaft from its rattling quiver,
They lifted the spear and sword,
And levell'd their spears in rows.
But down went axes and spears and bows,
When the Saint with his crosier sign'd;
The archer's hand on the string was stopt,
And down, like reeds laid flat by the wind,
Their lifted weapons dropt.
The Saint then gave a signal mute,
And though Ulvfagre will'd it not,
He came and stood at the statue's foot,
Spell-riveted to the spot,—
Till hands invisible shook the wall,

And the tottering image was dash'd
Down from its lofty pedestal.
On Ulvfagre's helm it crash'd—
Helmet, and skull, and flesh, and brain,
It crush'd as millstone crushes the grain.
Then spoke the Saint, whilst all and each
Of the Heathen trembled round,
And the pauses amidst his speech
Were as awful as the sound :

"Go back, ye wolves ! to your dens," he cried,
"And tell the nations abroad,
How the fiercest of your herd has died
That slaughter'd the flock of God.
Gather him bone by bone,
And take with you o'er the flood
The fragments of that avenging stone
That drank his heathen blood.
These are the spoils from Iona's sack,
The only spoils ye shall carry back ;
For the hand that uplifteth spear or sword
Shall be wither'd by palsy's shock,
And I come in the name of the Lord
To deliver a remnant of his flock."

A remnant was call'd together,
A doleful remnant of the Gaël,
And the Saint in the ship that had brought him hither
Took the mourners to Innisfail.
Unscathed they left Iona's strand,
When the opal morn first flush'd the sky,
For the Norse dropt spear, and bow, and brand,
And look'd on them silently ;

Safe from their hiding-places came
Orphans and mothers, child and dame:
But, alas! when the search for Reullura spread,
No answering voice was given,
For the sea had gone o'er her lovely head,
And her spirit was in Heaven.

1824.

THE TURKISH LADY

'Twas the hour when rites unholy
Call'd each Paynim voice to prayer,
And the star that faded slowly
Left to dews the freshen'd air.

Day her sultry fires had wasted,
Calm and sweet the moonlight rose;
Ev'n a captive spirit tasted
Half oblivion of his woes.

Then 'twas from an Emir's palace
Came an Eastern lady bright:
She, in spite of tyrants jealous,
Saw and loved an English knight.

"Tell me, captive, why in anguish
Foes have dragg'd thee here to dwell,
Where poor Christians as they languish
Hear no sound of Sabbath bell?"—

"'Twas on Translyvania's Bannat,
When the Crescent shone afar,
Like a pale disastrous planet
O'er the purple tide of war—

In that day of desolation,
Lady, I was captive made;
Bleeding for my Christian nation
By the walls of high Belgrade."

"Captive! could the brightest jewel
From my turban set thee free?"
"Lady, no!—the gift were cruel,
Ransom'd, yet if reft of thee.

Say, fair princess! would it grieve thee
Christian climes should we behold?"—
"Nay, bold knight! I would not leave thee
Were thy ransom paid in gold!"

Now in Heaven's blue expansion
Rose the midnight star to view,
When to quit her father's mansion
Thrice she wept, and bade adieu!

"Fly we then, while none discover!
Tyrant barks, in vain ye ride!"—
Soon at Rhodes the British lover
Clasp'd his blooming Eastern bride.

1809.

EARL MARCH

Earl March look'd on his dying child,
And smit with grief to view her—
The youth, he cried, whom I exiled,
Shall be restored to woo her.

She's at the window many an hour
His coming to discover:
And *he* look'd up to Ellen's bower,
And *she* look'd on her lover—

But ah! so pale, he knew her not,
Though her smile on him was dwelling.
And am I then forgot—forgot?—
It broke the heart of Ellen.

In vain he weeps, in vain he sighs,
Her cheek is cold as ashes;
Nor love's own kiss shall wake those eyes
To lift their silken lashes.

ADELGITHA

THE ordeal's fatal trumpet sounded,
And sad pale ADELGITHA came,
When forth a valiant champion bounded,
And slew the slanderer of her fame.

She wept, deliver'd from her danger;
But when he knelt to claim her glove—
"Seek not," she cried, "O gallant stranger,
For hapless ADELGITHA's love.

"For he is in a foreign far land
Whose arms should now have set me free;
And I must wear the willow garland
For him that's dead, or false to me."

"Nay! say not that his faith is tainted!"
He raised his vizor—At the sight
She fell into his arms and fainted;
It was indeed her own true knight!

1822.

THE RITTER BANN

THE Ritter Bann from Hungary
Came back, renown'd in arms,
But scorning jousts of chivalry,
And love and ladies' charms.

While other knights held revels, he
Was wrapt in thoughts of gloom,
And in Vienna's hostelrie
Slow paced his lonely room.

There enter'd one whose face he knew,—
Whose voice, he was aware,
He oft at mass had listen'd to
In the holy house of prayer.

'Twas the Abbot of St. James's monks,
A fresh and fair old man:
His reverend air arrested even
The gloomy Ritter Bann.

But seeing with him an ancient dame
Come clad in Scotch attire,
The Ritter's colour went and came,
And loud he spoke in ire:

"Ha! nurse of her that was my bane,
Name not her name to me;
I wish it blotted from my brain:
Art poor?—take alms, and flee."

"Sir Knight," the abbot interposed,
"This case your ear demands;"
And the crone cried, with a cross enclosed
In both her trembling hands:

"Remember, each his sentence waits;
And he that shall rebut
Sweet Mercy's suit, on him the gates
Of Mercy shall be shut.

"You wedded, undispensed by Church,
Your cousin Jane in Spring;—
In Autumn, when you went to search
For churchmen's pardoning,

"Her house denounced your marriage-band,
Betroth'd her to De Grey,
And the ring you put upon her hand
Was wrench'd by force away.

"Then wept your Jane upon my neck,
Crying, 'Help me, nurse, to flee
To my Howel Bann's Glamorgan hills;'
But word arrived—ah me!—

"You were not there; and 'twas their threat,
By foul means or by fair,
To-morrow morning was to set
The seal on her despair.

"I had a son, a sea-boy, in
A ship at Hartland Bay;
By his aid from her cruel kin
I bore my bird away.

"To Scotland from the Devon's
Green myrtle shores we fled;
And the Hand that sent the ravens
To Elijah, gave us bread.

"She wrote you by my son, but he
From England sent us word

You had gone into some far countrie,
In grief and gloom, he heard.

"For they that wrong'd you, to elude
Your wrath, defamed my child;
And you—ay, blush, Sir, as you should—
Believed, and were beguiled.

"To die but at your feet, she vow'd
To roam the world; and we
Would both have sped and begg'd our bread,
But so it might not be.

"For when the snow-storm beat our roof,
She bore a boy, Sir Bann,
Who grew as fair your likeness' proof
As child e'er grew like man.

"'Twas smiling on that babe one morn
While heath bloom'd on the moor,
Her beauty struck young Lord Kinghorn
As he hunted past our door.

"She shunn'd him, but he raved of Jane,
And roused his mother's pride:
Who came to us in high disdain,—
'And where's the face,' she cried,

"'Has witch'd my boy to wish for one
So wretched for his wife?—
Dost love thy husband? Know, my son
Has sworn to seek his life.'

"Her anger sore dismay'd us,
For our mite was wearing scant,
And, unless that dame would aid us,
There was none to aid our want.

"So I told her, weeping bitterly,
What all our woes had been;
And, though she was a stern ladie,
The tears stood in her een.

"And she housed us both, when, cheerfully,
My child to her had sworn,
That even if made a widow, she
Would never wed Kinghorn."——

Here paused the nurse, and then began
The abbot, standing by:—
"Three months ago a wounded man
To our abbey came to die.

"He heard me long, with ghastly eyes
And hand obdurate clench'd,
Speak of the worm that never dies,
And the fire that is not quench'd.

"At last by what this scroll attests
He left atonement brief,
For years of anguish to the breasts
His guilt had wrung with grief.

"'There lived,' he said, 'a fair young dame
Beneath my mother's roof;
I loved her, but against my flame
Her purity was proof.

"'I feign'd repentance, friendship pure;
That mood she did not check,
But let her husband's miniature
Be copied from her neck,

"'As means to search him; my deceit
Took care to him was borne

Nought but his picture's counterfeit,
And Jane's reported scorn.

"'The treachery took: she waited wild;
My slave came back and lied
Whate'er I wish'd; she clasp'd her child,
And swoon'd, and all but died.

"'I felt her tears for years and years
Quench not my flame, but stir;
The very hate I bore her mate
Increased my love for her.

"'Fame told us of his glory, while
Joy flush'd the face of Jane;
And while she bless'd his name, her smile
Struck fire into my brain.

"'No fears could damp; I reach'd the camp,
Sought out its champion;
And if my broad-sword fail'd at last,
'Twas long and well laid on.

"'This wound's my meed, my name's Kinghorn,
My foe's the Ritter Bann.'——
The wafer to his lips was borne,
And we shrived the dying man.

"He died not till you went to fight
The Turks at Warradein;
But I see my tale has changed you pale."—
The abbot went for wine;

And brought a little page who pour'd
It out, and knelt and smiled;—
The stunn'd knight saw himself restored
To childhood in his child;

And stoop'd and caught him to his breast,
Laugh'd loud and wept anon,
And with a shower of kisses press'd
The darling little one.

"And where went Jane?"—"To a nunnery, Sir—
Look not again so pale—
Kinghorn's old dame grew harsh to her."—
"And has she ta'en the veil?"—

"Sit down, Sir," said the priest, "I bar
Rash words."—They sat all three,
And the boy play'd with the knight's broad star
As he kept him on his knee.

"Think ere you ask her dwelling-place,"
The abbot further said;
"Time draws a veil o'er beauty's face
More deep than cloister's shade.

"Grief may have made her what you can
Scarce love perhaps for life."
"Hush, abbot," cried the Ritter Bann,
"Or tell me where's my wife."

The priest undid two doors that hid
The inn's adjacent room,
And there a lovely woman stood,
Tears bathed her beauty's bloom.

One moment may with bliss repay
Unnumber'd hours of pain,
Such was the throb and mutual sob
Of the knight embracing Jane.

1824.

THE BRAVE ROLAND

THE brave Roland !—the brave Roland !—
False tidings reach'd the Rhenish strand
That he had fallen in fight ;
And thy faithful bosom swoon'd with pain,
O loveliest maiden of Allémayne !
For the loss of thine own true knight.

But why so rash has she ta'en the veil,
In yon Nonnenwerder's cloisters pale ?
For her vow had scarce been sworn,
And the fatal mantle o'er her flung,
When the Drachenfels to a trumpet rung—
'Twas her own dear warrior's horn !

Woe ! woe ! each heart shall bleed—shall break !
She would have hung upon his neck,
Had he come but yester-even ;
And he had clasp'd those peerless charms
That shall never, never fill his arms,
Or meet him but in Heaven.

Yet Roland the brave—Roland the true—
He could not bid that spot adieu ;
It was dear still 'midst his woes,
For he loved to breathe the neighbouring air,
And to think she bless'd him in her prayer,
When the Halleluiah rose.

There's yet one window of that pile,
Which he built above the Nuns' green isle ;
Thence sad and oft look'd he
(When the chant and organ sounded slow)
On the mansion of his love below,
For herself he might not see.

She died !—He sought the battle-plain !
Her image fill'd his dying brain,
When he fell and wish'd to fall :
And her name was in his latest sigh,
When Roland, the flower of chivalry,
Expired at Roncevall.

1820.

THE SPECTRE BOAT

A BALLAD

LIGHT rued false Ferdinand to leave a lovely maid forlorn,
Who broke her heart and died to hide her blushing cheek from scorn.
One night he dreamt he woo'd her in their wonted bower of love,
Where the flowers sprang thick around them, and the birds sang sweet above.

But the scene was swiftly changed into a churchyard's dismal view,
And her lips grew black beneath his kiss, from love's delicious hue.
What more he dreamt, he told to none ; but shuddering, pale, and dumb,
Look'd out upon the waves, like one that knew his hour was come.

'Twas now the dead watch of the night—the helm was lash'd a-lee,
And the ship rode where Mount Ætna lights the deep Levantine sea ;

When beneath its glare a boat came, row'd by a woman
in her shroud,
Who, with eyes that made our blood run cold, stood up
and spoke aloud :—

"Come, Traitor, down, for whom my ghost still wanders
unforgiven !
Come down, false Ferdinand, for whom I broke my
peace with heaven !"—
It was vain to hold the victim, for he plunged to meet
her call,
Like the bird that shrieks and flutters in the gazing
serpent's thrall.

You may guess the boldest mariner shrunk daunted from
the sight,
For the Spectre and her winding-sheet shone blue with
hideous light ;
Like a fiery wheel the boat spun with the waving of
her hand,
And round they went, and down they went, as the cock
crew from the land.

1822.

TRANSLATIONS

TRANSLATIONS

MARTIAL ELEGY

FROM THE GREEK OF TYRTÆUS

How glorious fall the valiant, sword in hand,
In front of battle for their native land!
But oh! what ills await the wretch that yields,
A recreant outcast from his country's fields!
The mother whom he loves shall quit her home,
An aged father at his side shall roam;
His little ones shall weeping with him go,
And a young wife participate his woe;
While scorn'd and scowl'd upon by every face,
They pine for food, and beg from place to place.

Stain of his breed! dishonouring manhood's form,
All ills shall cleave to him:—Affliction's storm
Shall blind him wandering in the vale of years,
Till, lost to all but ignominious fears,
He shall not blush to leave a recreant's name,
And children, like himself, inured to shame.

But we will combat for our fathers' land,
And we will drain the life-blood where we stand,
To save our children:—fight ye side by side,
And serried close, ye men of youthful pride,
Disdaining fear, and deeming light the cost
Of life itself in glorious battle lost.

Leave not our sires to stem the unequal fight,
Whose limbs are nerved no more with buoyant might ;
Nor, lagging backward, let the younger breast
Permit the man of age (a sight unbless'd)
To welter in the combat's foremost thrust,
His hoary head dishevell'd in the dust,
And venerable bosom bleeding bare.

But youth's fair form, though fallen, is ever fair.
And beautiful in death the boy appears,
The hero boy, that dies in blooming years :
In man's regret he lives, and woman's tears,
More sacred than in life, and lovelier far,
For having perish'd in the front of war.

1822.

SONG OF HYBRIAS THE CRETAN

My wealth's a burly spear and brand,
And a right good shield of hides untann'd,
Which on my arm I buckle :
With these I plough, I reap, I sow,
With these I make the sweet vintage flow,
And all around me truckle.

But your wights that take no pride to wield
A massy spear and well-made shield,
Nor joy to draw the sword :
Oh, I bring those heartless, hapless drones
Down in a trice on their marrow-bones,
To call me King and Lord.

1823.

FRAGMENT

FROM THE GREEK OF ALCMAN

THE mountain summits sleep: glens, cliffs, and caves
Are silent—all the black earth's reptile brood—
The bees—the wild beasts of the mountain wood:
In depths beneath the dark red ocean's waves
Its monsters rest, whilst wrapt in bower and spray
Each bird is hush'd that stretch'd its pinions to the day.

1822.

IN BLANK VERSE

LINES

ON THE VIEW FROM ST. LEONARDS

HAIL to thy face and odours, glorious Sea !
'Twere thanklessness in me to bless thee not,
Great beauteous Being ! in whose breath and smile
My heart beats calmer, and my very mind
Inhales salubrious thoughts. How welcomer
Thy murmurs than the murmurs of the world !
Though like the world thou fluctuatest, thy din
To me is peace, thy restlessness repose.
Ev'n gladly I exchange yon spring-green lanes
With all the darling field-flowers in their prime,
And gardens haunted by the nightingale's
Long trills and gushing ecstasies of song,
For these wild headlands, and the sea-mew's clang.—

With thee beneath my windows, pleasant Sea,
I long not to o'erlook earth's fairest glades
And green savannahs—Earth has not a plain
So boundless or so beautiful as thine ;
The eagle's vision cannot take it in :
The lightning's wing, too weak to sweep its space,
Sinks half-way o'er it like a wearied bird :
It is the mirror of the stars, where all
Their hosts within the concave firmament,

Gay marching to the music of the spheres,
Can see themselves at once.
Nor on the stage
Of rural landscape are there lights and shades
Of more harmonious dance and play than thine.
How vividly, this moment, brightens forth,
Between grey parallel and leaden breadths,
A belt of hues that stripes thee many a league,
Flush'd like the rainbow, or the ringdove's neck,
And giving to the glancing sea-bird's wing
The semblance of a meteor.
Mighty Sea!
Cameleon-like thou changest, but there's love
In all thy change, and constant sympathy
With yonder Sky—thy Mistress; from her brow
Thou tak'st thy moods and wear'st her colours on
Thy faithful bosom; morning's milky white,
Noon's sapphire, or the saffron glow of eve;
And all thy balmier hours, fair Element,
Have such divine complexion—crisped smiles,
Luxuriant heavings, and sweet whisperings,
That little is the wonder Love's own Queen
From thee of old was fabled to have sprung—
Creation's common! which no human power
Can parcel or inclose; the lordliest floods
And cataracts that the tiny hands of man
Can tame, conduct, or bound, are drops of dew
To thee that couldst subdue the Earth itself,
And brook'st commandment from the heavens alone
For marshalling thy waves—
Yet, potent Sea!
How placidly thy moist lips speak ev'n now
Along yon sparkling shingles. Who can be
So fanciless as to feel no gratitude
That power and grandeur can be so serene,

Soothing the home-bound navy's peaceful way,
And rocking ev'n the fisher's little bark
As gently as a mother rocks her child?—

The inhabitants of other worlds behold
Our orb more lucid for thy spacious share
On earth's rotundity; and is he not
A blind worm in the dust, great Deep, the man
Who sees not or who seeing has no joy
In thy magnificence? What though thou art
Unconscious and material, thou canst reach
The inmost immaterial mind's recess,
And with thy tints and motion stir its chords
To music, like the light on Memnon's lyre!

The Spirit of the Universe in thee
Is visible; thou hast in thee the life—
The eternal, graceful, and majestic life
Of nature, and the natural human heart
Is therefore bound to thee with holy love.
Earth has her gorgeous towns; the earth-circling sea
Has spires and mansions more amusive still—
Men's volant homes that measure liquid space
On wheel or wing. The chariot of the land
With pain'd and panting steeds and clouds of dust
Has no sight-gladdening motion like these fair
Careerers with the foam beneath their bows,
Whose streaming ensigns charm the waves by day,
Whose carols and whose watch-bells cheer the night,
Moor'd as they cast the shadows of their masts
In long array, or hither flit and yond
Mysteriously with slow and crossing lights,
Like spirits on the darkness of the deep.

There is a magnet-like attraction in
These waters to the imaginative power

That links the viewless with the visible,
And pictures things unseen. To realms beyond
Yon highway of the world my fancy flies,
When by her tall and triple mast we know
Some noble voyager that has to woo
The trade-winds and to stem the ecliptic surge.
The coral groves—the shores of conch and pearl,
Where she will cast her anchor and reflect
Her cabin-window lights on warmer waves,
And under planets brighter than our own:
The nights of palmy isles, that she will see
Lit boundless by the fire-fly—all the smells
Of tropic fruits that will regale her—all
The pomp of nature, and the inspiriting
Varieties of life she has to greet,
Come swarming o'er the meditative mind.

True, to the dream of Fancy, Ocean has
His darker tints; but where's the element
That chequers not its usefulness to man
With casual terror? Scathes not Earth sometimes
Her children with Tartarean fires, or shakes
Their shrieking cities, and, with one last clang
Of bells for their own ruin, strews them flat
As riddled ashes—silent as the grave?
Walks not Contagion on the Air itself?
I should—old Ocean's Saturnalian days
And roaring nights of revelry and sport
With wreck and human woe—be loth to sing;
For they are few, and all their ills weigh light
Against his sacred usefulness, that bids
Our pensile globe revolve in purer air.
Here Morn and Eve with blushing thanks receive
Their freshening dews, gay fluttering breezes cool
Their wings to fan the brow of fever'd climes,

And here the Spring dips down her emerald urn
For showers to glad the earth.
Old Ocean was
Infinity of ages ere we breathed
Existence—and he will be beautiful
When all the living world that sees him now
Shall roll unconscious dust around the sun.
Quelling from age to age the vital throb
In human hearts, Death shall not subjugate
The pulse that swells in *his* stupendous breast,
Or interdict his minstrelsy to sound
In thundering concert with the quiring winds;
But long as Man to parent Nature owns
Instinctive homage, and in times beyond
The power of thought to reach, bard after bard
Shall sing thy glory, BEATIFIC SEA.

1831.

THE DEAD EAGLE

WRITTEN AT ORAN

FALL'N as he is, this king of birds still seems
Like royalty in ruins. Though his eyes
Are shut, that look undazzled on the sun,
He was the sultan of the sky, and earth
Paid tribute to his eyry. It was perch'd
Higher than human conqueror ever built
His banner'd fort. Where Atlas' top looks o'er
Zahara's desert to the equator's line:
From thence the winged despot mark'd his prey,
Above th' encampments of the Bedouins, ere
Their watchfires were extinct, or camels knelt

To take their loads, or horsemen scour'd the plain,
And there he dried his feathers in the dawn,
Whilst yet th' unwaken'd world was dark below.

There's such a charm in natural strength and power,
That human fancy has for ever paid
Poetic homage to the bird of Jove.
Hence, 'neath his image, Rome array'd her turms
And cohorts for the conquest of the world.
And figuring his flight, the mind is fill'd
With thoughts that mock the pride of wingless man.
True the carr'd aeronaut can mount as high ;
But what's the triumph of his volant art ?
A rash intrusion on the realms of air.
His helmless vehicle, a silken toy,
A bubble bursting in the thunder-cloud ;
His course has no volition, and he drifts
The passive plaything of the winds. Not such
Was this proud bird : he clove the adverse storm,
And cuff'd it with his wings. He stopp'd his flight
As easily as the Arab reins his steed,
And stood at pleasure 'neath Heaven's zenith, like
A lamp suspended from its azure dome,
Whilst underneath him the world's mountains lay
Like molehills, and her streams like lucid threads.
Then downward, faster than a falling star,
He near'd the earth, until his shape distinct
Was blackly shadow'd on the sunny ground ;
And deeper terror hush'd the wilderness,
To hear his nearer whoop. Then, up again
He soar'd and wheel'd. There was an air of scorn
In all his movements, whether he threw round
His crested head to look behind him ; or
Lay vertical and sportively display'd
The inside whiteness of his wing declined,

In gyres and undulations full of grace,
An object beautifying Heaven itself.

He—reckless who was victor, and above
The hearing of their guns—saw fleets engaged
In flaming combat. It was nought to him
What carnage, Moor or Christian, strew'd their decks.
But if his intellect had match'd his wings,
Methinks he would have scorn'd man's vaunted power
To plough the deep; his pinions bore him down
To Algiers the warlike, or the coral groves,
That blush beneath the green of Bona's waves;
And traversed in an hour a wider space
Than yonder gallant ship, with all her sails
Wooing the winds, can cross from morn till eve.
His bright eyes were his compass, earth his chart,
His talons anchor'd on the stormiest cliff,
And on the very light-house rock he perch'd,
When winds churn'd white the waves.
The earthquake's self
Disturb'd not him that memorable day,
When, o'er yon table-land, where Spain had built
Cathedrals, cannon'd forts, and palaces,
A palsy-stroke of Nature shook Oran,
Turning her city to a sepulchre,
And strewing into rubbish all her homes;
Amidst whose traceable foundations now,
Of streets and squares, the hyæna hides himself.
That hour beheld him fly as careless o'er
The stifled shrieks of thousands buried quick,
As lately when he pounced the speckled snake,
Coil'd in yon mallows and wide nettle fields
That mantle o'er the dead old Spanish town.

Strange is the imagination's dread delight
In objects link'd with danger, death, and pain!

Fresh from the luxuries of polish'd life,
The echo of these wilds enchanted me;
And my heart beat with joy when first I heard
A lion's roar come down the Lybian wind,
Across yon long, wide, lonely inland lake,
Where boat ne'er sails from homeless shore to shore.
And yet Numidia's landscape has its spots
Of pastoral pleasantness—though far between,
The village planted near the Maraboot's
Round roof has aye its feathery palm trees
Pair'd, for in solitude they bear no fruits.
Here nature's hues all harmonise—fields white
With alasum, or blue with bugloss—banks
Of glossy fennel, blent with tulips wild,
And sunflowers, like a garment prankt with gold;
Acres and miles of opal asphodel,
Where sports and couches the black-eyed gazelle.
Here, too, the air's harmonious—deep-toned doves
Coo to the fife-like carol of the lark;
And, when they cease, the holy nightingale
Winds up his long, long shakes of ecstasy,
With notes that seem but the protracted sounds
Of glassy runnels bubbling over rocks

1835.

IN THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM

THE DEATH-BOAT OF HELIGOLAND

Can restlessness reach the cold sepulchred head?—
Ay, the quick have their sleep-walkers, so have the dead.
There are brains, though they moulder, that dream in the tomb,
And that maddening forehear the last trumpet of doom,
Till their corses start sheeted to revel on earth,
Making horror more deep by the semblance of mirth:
By the glare of new-lighted volcanoes they dance,
Or at mid-sea appal the chill'd mariner's glance.
Such, I wot, was the band of cadaverous smile
Seen ploughing the night-surge of Heligo's isle.

The foam of the Baltic had sparkled like fire,
And the red moon look'd down with an aspect of ire;
But her beams on a sudden grew sick-like and grey,
And the mews that had slept clang'd and shriek'd far away—
And the buoys and the beacons extinguish'd their light,
As the boat of the stony-eyed dead came in sight,
High bounding from billow to billow; each form
Had its shroud like a plaid flying loose to the storm;
With an oar in each pulseless and icy-cold hand,
Fast they plough'd by the lee-shore of Heligoland,
Such breakers as boat of the living ne'er cross'd;
Now surf-sunk for minutes again they uptoss'd,
And with livid lips shouted reply o'er the flood
To the challenging watchman, that curdled his blood—

"We are dead—we are bound from our graves in the west,
First to Hecla, and then to—" Unmeet was the rest
For man's ear. The old abbey bell thunder'd its clang,
And their eyes gleam'd with phosphorous light as it rang:
Ere they vanish'd, they stopp'd, and gazed silently grim,
Till the eye could define them, garb, feature, and limb.

Now who were those roamers?—of gallows or wheel
Bore they marks, or the mangling anatomist's steel?
No, by magistrates' chains 'mid their grave-clothes you saw
They were felons too proud to have perish'd by law:
But a ribbon that hung where a rope should have been,
'Twas the badge of their faction, its hue was not green,
Show'd them men who had trampled and tortured and driven
To rebellion the fairest Isle breath'd on by Heaven,—
Men whose heirs would yet finish the tyrannous task,
If the Truth and the Time had not dragg'd off their mask.
They parted—but not till the sight might discern
A scutcheon distinct at their pinnace's stern,
Where letters emblazon'd in blood-colour'd flame,
Named their faction—I blot not my page with its name.

1828.

STANZAS

TO THE MEMORY OF THE SPANISH PATRIOTS LATEST KILLED IN RESISTING THE REGENCY AND THE DUKE OF ANGOULEME.

BRAVE men who at the Trocadero fell—
Beside your cannons conquer'd not, though slain,

There is a victory in dying well
For Freedom,—and ye have not died in vain ;
For, come what may, there shall be hearts in Spain
To honour, ay embrace your martyr'd lot,
Cursing the Bigot's and the Bourbon's chain,
And looking on your graves, though trophied not,
As holier hallow'd ground than priests could make the spot !

What though your cause be baffled—freemen cast
In dungeons—dragg'd to death, or forced to flee?
Hope is not wither'd in affliction's blast—
The patriot's blood's the seed of Freedom's tree ;
And short your orgies of revenge shall be,
Cowl'd Demons of the Inquisitorial cell !
Earth shudders at your victory,—for ye
Are worse than common fiends from Heaven that fell,
The baser, ranker sprung, *Autochthones* of Hell !

Go to your bloody rites again—bring back
The hall of horrors and the assessor's pen,
Recording answers shriek'd upon the rack ;
Smile o'er the gaspings of spine-broken men ;—
Preach, perpetrate damnation in your den ;—
Then let your altars, ye blasphemers ! peal
With thanks to Heaven, that let you loose again,
To practise deeds with torturing fire and steel
No eye may search—no tongue may challenge or reveal !

Yet laugh not in your carnival of crime
Too proudly, ye oppressors !—Spain was free,
Her soil has felt the foot-prints, and her clime
Been winnow'd by the wings of Liberty ;
And these even parting scatter as they flee
Thoughts—influences, to live in hearts unborn,

Opinions that shall wrench the prison-key
From Persecution—show her mask off-torn,
And tramp her bloated head beneath the foot of Scorn.

Glory to them that die in this great cause!
Kings, Bigots, can inflict no brand of shame,
Or shape of death, to shroud them from applause:—
No!—manglers of the martyr's earthly frame!
Your hangmen fingers cannot touch his fame.
Still in your prostrate land there shall be some
Proud hearts, the shrines of Freedom's vestal flame.
Long trains of ill may pass unheeded, dumb,
But vengeance is behind, and justice is to come.

1823.

STANZAS

ON THE BATTLE OF NAVARINO

Hearts of oak that have bravely deliver'd the brave
And uplifted old Greece from the brink of the grave,
'Twas the helpless to help, and the hopeless to save,
That your thunderbolts swept o'er the brine;
And as long as yon sun shall look down on the wave
The light of your glory shall shine.

For the guerdon ye sought with your bloodshed and toil,
Was it slaves, or dominion, or rapine, or spoil?
No! your lofty emprise was to fetter and foil
The uprooter of Greece's domain!
When he tore the last remnant of food from her soil,
Till her famish'd sank pale as the slain!

Yet, Navarin's heroes! does Christendom breed
The base hearts that will question the fame of your deed?

Are they men?—let ineffable scorn be their meed,
And oblivion shadow their graves!—
Are they women?—To Turkish serails let them speed;
And be mothers of Mussulman slaves.

Abettors of massacre! dare ye deplore
That the death-shriek is silenced on Hellas's shore?
That the mother aghast sees her offspring no more
By the hand of Infanticide grasp'd?
And that stretch'd on yon billows distain'd by their gore
Missolonghi's assassins have gasp'd?

Prouder scene never hallow'd war's pomp to the mind,
Than when Christendom's pennons woo'd social the wind,
And the flower of her brave for the combat combined,
Their watch-word humanity's vow;
Not a sea-boy that fought in that cause, but mankind
Owes a garland to honour his brow!

Nor grudge, by our side, that to conquer or fall,
Came the hardy rude Russ, and the high-mettled Gaul;
For whose was the genius, that plann'd at its call,
Where the whirlwind of battle should roll?
All were brave! but the star of success over all
Was the light of our Codrington's soul.

That star of thy day-spring, regenerate Greek!
Dimm'd the Saracen's moon, and struck pallid his cheek:
In its fast flushing morning thy Muses shall speak
When their lore and their lutes they reclaim:
And the first of their songs from Parnassus's peak
Shall be "*Glory to Codrington's name!*"

1828.

ODE TO THE GERMANS

THE spirit of Britannia
  Invokes, across the main,
Her sister Allemannia
  To burst the Tyrant's chain:
By our kindred blood, she cries,
Rise, Allemannians, rise,
  And hallow'd thrice the band
Of our kindred hearts shall be,
  When your land shall be the land
    Of the free—of the free!

With Freedom's lion-banner
  Britannia rules the waves;
Whilst your BROAD STONE OF HONOUR
  Is still the camp of slaves.
For shame, for glory's sake,
Wake, Allemannians, wake,
  And thy tyrants now that whelm
Half the world shall quail and flee,
  When your realm shall be the realm
    Of the free—of the free!

MARS owes to you his thunder
  That shakes the battle-field,
Yet to break your bonds asunder
  No martial bolt has peal'd.
Shall the laurell'd land of art
Wear shackles on her heart?
  No! the clock ye framed to tell
By its sound, the march of time;
  Let it clang oppression's knell
    O'er your clime—o'er your clime!

The press's magic letters,
That blessing ye brought forth,—
Behold ! it lies in fetters
On the soil that gave it birth :
But the trumpet must be heard,
And the charger must be spurr'd ;
For your father Armin's Sprite
Calls down from heaven, that ye
Shall gird you for the fight,
And be free !—and be free !

1831.

THE POWER OF RUSSIA

So all this gallant blood has gush'd in vain !
And Poland, by the Northern Condor's beak
And talons torn, lies prostrated again.
O British patriots, that were wont to speak
Once loudly on this theme, now hush'd or meek !
O heartless men of Europe—Goth and Gaul,
Cold, adder-deaf to Poland's dying shriek ;—
That saw the world's last land of heroes fall—
The brand of burning shame is on you all—all—all !

But this is not the drama's closing act !
Its tragic curtain must uprise anew.
Nations, mute accessories to the fact !
That Upas-tree of power, whose fostering dew
Was Polish blood, has yet to cast o'er you
The lengthening shadow of its head elate—
A deadly shadow, darkening Nature's hue.
To all that's hallow'd, righteous, pure and great,
Woe ! woe ! when they are reach'd by Russia's withering hate.

Russia, that on his throne of adamant
Consults what nation's breast shall next be gored :
He on Polonia's Golgotha will plant
His standard fresh ; and, horde succeeding horde,
On patriot tomb-stones he will whet the sword
For more stupendous slaughters of the free.
Then Europe's realms, when their best blood is pour'd,
Shall miss thee, Poland ! as they bend the knee,
All—all in grief, but none in glory, likening thee.

Why smote ye not the Giant whilst he reel'd ?
O fair occasion, gone for ever by !
To have lock'd his lances in their northern field,
Innocuous as the phantom chivalry
That flames and hurtles from yon boreal sky !
Now wave thy pennon, Russia, o'er the land
Once Poland ; build thy bristling castles high ;
Dig dungeons deep ; for Poland's wrested brand
Is now a weapon new to widen thy command—

An awful width ! Norwegian woods shall build
His fleets ; the Swede his vassal, and the Dane ;
The glebe of fifty kingdoms shall be till'd
To feed his dazzling, desolating train,
Camp'd sumless, 'twixt the Black and Baltic main :
Brute hosts, I own ; but Sparta could not write,
And Rome, half-barbarous, bound Achaia's chain :
So Russia's spirit, 'midst Sclavonic night,
Burns with a fire more dread than all your polish'd light.

But Russia's limbs (so blinded statesmen speak)
Are crude, and too colossal to cohere.
O lamentable weakness ! reckoning weak
The stripling Titan, strengthening year by year.
What implement lacks he for war's career,

That grows on earth, or in its floods and mines,
(Eighth sharer of the inhabitable sphere,)
Whom Persia bows to, China ill confines,
And India's homage waits, when Albion's star declines!

But time will teach the Russ, ev'n conquering War
Has handmaid arts: ay, ay, the Russ will woo
All sciences that speed Bellona's car,
All murder's tactic arts, and win them too;
But never holier Muses shall imbue
His breast, that's made of nature's basest clay:
The sabre, knout, and dungeon's vapour blue
His laws and ethics: far from him away
Are all the lovely Nine, that breathe but Freedom's day.

Say, ev'n his serfs, half-humanised, should learn
Their human rights,—will Mars put out his flame
In Russian bosoms? no, he'll bid them burn
A thousand years for nought but martial fame,
Like Romans:—yet forgive me, Roman name!
Rome could impart what Russia never can;
Proud civic rights to salve submission's shame.
Our strife is coming; but in freedom's van
The Polish eagle's fall is big with fate to man.

Proud bird of old! Mohammed's moon recoil'd
Before thy swoop: had we been timely bold,
That swoop, still free, had stunn'd the Russ, and foil'd
Earth's new oppressors, as it foil'd her old.
Now thy majestic eyes are shut and cold:
And colder still Polonia's children find
The sympathetic hands, that we outhold.
But, Poles, when we are gone, the world will mind
Ye bore the brunt of fate, and bled for humankind.

So hallowedly have ye fulfill'd your part,
My pride repudiates ev'n the sigh that blends
With Poland's name—name written on my heart.
My heroes, my grief-consecrated friends!
Your sorrow, in nobility, transcends
Your conqueror's joy: his cheek may blush; but shame
Can tinge not yours, though exile's tear descends;
Nor would ye change your conscience, cause, and name,
For his, with all his wealth, and all his felon fame.

Thee, Niemciewitz, whose song of stirring power
The Czar forbids to sound in Polish lands;
Thee, Czartoryski, in thy banish'd bower,
The patricide, who in thy palace stands,
May envy; proudly may Polonia's bands
Throw down their swords at Europe's feet in scorn,
Saying—"Russia from the metal of these brands
Shall forge the fetters of your sons unborn;
Our setting star is your misfortunes' rising morn."

1831.

OCCASIONAL AND PERSONAL

ODE TO THE MEMORY OF BURNS

SOUL of the Poet! whereso'er
Reclaim'd from earth, thy genius plume
Her wings of immortality:
Suspend thy harp in happier sphere,
And with thine influence illume
The gladness of our jubilee.

And fly like fiends from secret spell,
Discord and Strife, at BURNS'S name,
Exorcised by his memory;
For he was chief of bards that swell
The heart with songs of social flame,
And high delicious revelry.

And Love's own strain to him was given,
To warble all its ecstasies
With Pythian words unsought, unwill'd,—
Love, the surviving gift of Heaven,
The choicest sweet of Paradise,
In life's else bitter cup distill'd.

Who that has melted o'er his lay
To Mary's soul, in Heaven above,
But pictured sees, in fancy strong,
The landscape and the livelong day
That smiled upon their mutual love?
Who that has felt forgets the song?

Nor skill'd one flame alone to fan :
His country's high-soul'd peasantry
What patriot-pride he taught !—how much
To weigh the inborn worth of man !
And rustic life and poverty
Grow beautiful beneath his touch.

Him in his clay-built cot, the Muse
Entranced, and show'd him all the forms,
Of fairy-light and wizard gloom,
(That only gifted Poet views,)
The Genii of the floods and storms,
And martial shades from Glory's tomb.

On Bannock-field what thoughts arouse
The swain whom BURNS's song inspires !
Beat not his Caledonian veins,
As o'er the heroic turf he ploughs,
With all the spirit of his sires,
And all their scorn of death and chains ?

And see the Scottish exile, tann'd
By many a far and foreign clime,
Bend o'er his home-born verse, and weep
In memory of his native land,
With love that scorns the lapse of time,
And ties that stretch beyond the deep.

Encamp'd by Indian rivers wild,
The soldier resting on his arms,
In BURNS's carol sweet recalls
The scenes that bless'd him when a child,
And glows and gladdens at the charms
Of Scotia's woods and waterfalls.

O deem not, 'midst this worldly strife,
An idle art the Poet brings:
Let high Philosophy control,
And sages calm, the stream of life,
'Tis he refines its fountain-springs,
The nobler passions of the soul.

It is the muse that consecrates
The native banner of the brave,
Unfurling, at the trumpet's breath,
Rose, thistle, harp; 'tis she elates
To sweep the field or ride the wave,
A sunburst in the storm of death.

And thou, young hero, when thy pall
Is cross'd with mournful sword and plume,
When public grief begins to fade,
And only tears of kindred fall,
Who but the Bard shall dress thy tomb,
And greet with fame thy gallant shade!

Such was the soldier—BURNS, forgive
That sorrows of mine own intrude
In strains to thy great memory due.
In verse like thine, oh! could he live,
The friend I mourn'd—the brave—the good—
Edward that died at Waterloo!

Farewell, high chief of Scottish song!
That couldst alternately impart
Wisdom and rapture in thy page,
And brand each vice with satire strong;
Whose lines are mottoes of the heart,
Whose truths electrify the sage.

Farewell! and ne'er may Envy dare
To wring one baleful poison drop
From the crush'd laurels of thy bust:
But while the lark sings sweet in air,
Still may the grateful pilgrim stop,
To bless the spot that holds thy dust.

1815.

VALEDICTORY STANZAS TO J. P. KEMBLE, Esq.

COMPOSED FOR A PUBLIC MEETING HELD JUNE 1817

Pride of the British stage,
A long and last adieu!
Whose image brought th' heroic age
Revived to Fancy's view.
Like fields refresh'd with dewy light
When the sun smiles his last,
Thy parting presence makes more bright
Our memory of the past;
And memory conjures feelings up
That wine or music need not swell,
As high we lift the festal cup
To Kemble—fare thee well!

His was the spell o'er hearts
Which only Acting lends,—
The youngest of the sister Arts,
Where all their beauty blends:
For ill can Poetry express
Full many a tone of thought sublime,
And Painting, mute and motionless,
Steals but a glance of time.

But by the mighty actor brought,
Illusion's perfect triumphs come,—
Verse ceases to be airy thought,
And Sculpture to be dumb.

Time may again revive,
But ne'er eclipse the charm,
When Cato spoke in him alive,
Or Hotspur kindled warm.
What soul was not resign'd entire
To the deep sorrows of the Moor,—
What English heart was not on fire
With him at Agincourt?
And yet a majesty possess'd
His transport's most impetuous tone,
And to each passion of the breast
The Graces gave their zone.

High were the task—too high,
Ye conscious bosoms here!
In words to paint your memory
Of Kemble and of Lear;
But who forgets that white discrowned head,
Those bursts of Reason's half-extinguish'd glare;
Those tears upon Cordelia's bosom shed,
In doubt—more touching than despair—
If 'twas reality he felt?
Had Shakspeare's self amidst you been,
Friends, he had seen you melt,
And triumph'd to have seen!

And there was many an hour
Of blended kindred fame,
When Siddons's auxiliar power
And sister magic came.

Together at the Muse's side
The tragic paragons had grown—
They were the children of her pride,
The columns of her throne;
And undivided favour ran
From heart to heart in their applause,
Save for the gallantry of man
In lovelier woman's cause.

Fair as some classic dome,
Robust and richly graced,
Your KEMBLE'S spirit was the home
Of genius and of taste;
Taste, like the silent dial's power,
That when supernal light is given,
Can measure inspiration's hour,
And tell its height in heaven.
At once ennobled and correct,
His mind survey'd the tragic page,
And what the actor could effect,
The scholar could presage.

These were his traits of worth:—
And must we lose them now!
And shall the scene no more show forth
His sternly-pleasing brow!
Alas, the moral brings a tear!—
'Tis all a transient hour below;
And we that would detain thee here,
Ourselves as fleetly go!
Yet shall our latest age
This parting scene review:—
Pride of the British stage,
A long and last adieu!

1817.

LINES

ON REVISITING A SCOTTISH RIVER

And call they this Improvement?—to have changed,
My native Clyde, thy once romantic shore,
Where Nature's face is banish'd and estranged,
And Heaven reflected in thy wave no more;
Whose banks, that sweeten'd May-day's breath before,
Lie sere and leafless now in summer's beam,
With sooty exhalations cover'd o'er;
And for the daisied green-sward, down thy stream
Unsightly brick-lanes smoke, and clanking engines gleam.

Speak not to me of swarms the scene sustains;
One heart free tasting Nature's breath and bloom
Is worth a thousand slaves to Mammon's gains.
But whither goes that wealth, and gladdening whom?
See, left but life enough and breathing-room
The hunger and the hope of life to feel,
Yon pale Mechanic bending o'er his loom,
And Childhood's self as at Ixion's wheel,
From morn till midnight task'd to earn its little meal.

Is this Improvement?—where the human breed
Degenerate as they swarm and overflow,
Till Toil grows cheaper than the trodden weed,
And man competes with man, like foe with foe,
Till Death, that thins them, scarce seems public woe?
Improvement!—smiles it in the poor man's eyes,
Or blooms it on the cheek of Labour?—No—
To gorge a few with Trade's precarious prize,
We banish rural life, and breathe unwholesome skies.

Nor call that evil slight ; God has not given
This passion to the heart of man in vain,
For Earth's green face, th' untainted air of Heaven,
And all the bliss of Nature's rustic reign.
For not alone our frame imbibes a stain
From fœtid skies ; the spirit's healthy pride
Fades in their gloom—And therefore I complain,
That thou no more through pastoral scenes shouldst glide,
My Wallace's own stream, and once romantic Clyde !

1826

LINES

ON RECEIVING A SEAL WITH THE CAMPBELL CREST, FROM K. M—, BEFORE HER MARRIAGE

This wax returns not back more fair
Th' impression of the gift you send,
Than stamp'd upon my thoughts I bear
The image of your worth, my friend !—

We are not friends of yesterday ;—
But poets' fancies are a little
Disposed to heat and cool, (they say,)—
By turns impressible and brittle.

Well ! should its frailty e'er condemn
My heart to prize or please you less,
Your type is still the sealing gem,
And *mine* the waxen brittleness.

What transcripts of my weal and woe
This little signet yet may lock,—

What utterances to friend or foe,
In reason's calm or passion's shock !

What scenes of life's yet curtain'd stage
May own its confidential die,
Whose stamp awaits th' unwritten page,
And feelings of futurity !—

Yet wheresoe'er my pen I lift
To date the epistolary sheet,
The blest occasion of the gift
Shall make its recollection sweet ;

Sent when the star that rules your fates
Hath reach'd its influence most benign—
When every heart congratulates
And none more cordially than mine.

So speed my song—mark'd with the crest
That erst the advent'rous Norman wore,
Who won the Lady of the West,
The daughter of Macaillan Mor.

Crest of my sires ! whose blood it seal'd
With glory in the strife of swords,
Ne'er may the scroll that bears it yield
Degenerate thoughts or faithless words !

Yet little might I prize the stone,
If it but typed the feudal tree
From whence, a scatter'd leaf, I'm blown
In Fortune's mutability.

No !—but it tells me of a heart
Allied by friendship's living tie ;
A prize beyond the herald's art—
Our soul-sprung consanguinity !

KATH'RINE! to many an hour of mine
Light wings and sunshine you have lent;
And so adieu, and still be thine
The all-in-all of life—Content!

1819.

LINES

TO EDWARD LYTTON BULWER ON THE BIRTH OF HIS CHILD

MY heart is with you, Bulwer, and pourtrays
The blessings of your first paternal days;
To clasp the pledge of purest, holiest faith,
To taste one's own and love-born infant's breath,
I know, nor would for worlds forget the bliss
I've felt, that to a father's heart that kiss,
As o'er its little lips you smile and cling,
Has fragrance which Arabia could not bring.

Such are the joys, ill mock'd in ribald song,
In thought, ev'n freshening life our lifetime long,
That give our souls on earth a heaven-drawn bloom;
Without them we are weeds upon a tomb.

Joy be to thee, and her, whose lot with thine
Propitious stars saw Truth and Passion twine!
Joy be to her who in your rising name
Feels Love's bower brighten'd by the beams of Fame!
I lack'd a father's claim to her—but knew
Regard for her young years so pure and true,
That when she at the altar stood your bride,
A sire could scarce have felt more sire-like pride.

1828.

LINES TO JULIA M——

SENT WITH A COPY OF THE AUTHOR'S POEMS

SINCE there is magic in your look,
And in your voice a witching charm,
As all our hearts consenting tell,
Enchantress, smile upon my book,
And guard its lays from hate and harm
By beauty's most resistless spell.

The sunny dew-drop of thy praise,
Young day-star of the rising time,
Shall with its odoriferous morn
Refresh my sere and wither'd bays:
Smile, and I will believe my rhyme
Shall please the beautiful unborn.

Go forth, my pictured thoughts, and rise
In traits and tints of sweeter tone,
When Julia's glance is o'er ye flung;
Glow, gladden, linger in her eyes,
And catch a magic not your own,
Read by the music of her tongue.

1829.

A THOUGHT SUGGESTED BY THE NEW YEAR

THE more we live, more brief appear
Our life's succeeding stages:
A day to childhood seems a year,
And years like passing ages.

The gladsome current of our youth,
Ere passion yet disorders,
Steals, lingering like a river smooth
Along its grassy borders.

But as the care-worn cheek grows wan,
And sorrow's shafts fly thicker,
Ye stars, that measure life to man,
Why seem your courses quicker?

When joys have lost their bloom and breath,
And life itself is vapid,
Why, as we reach the Falls of death,
Feel we its tide more rapid?

It may be strange—yet who would change
Time's course to slower speeding;
When one by one our friends have gone,
And left our bosoms bleeding?

Heaven gives our years of fading strength
Indemnifying fleetness;
And those of youth, a *seeming length*,
Proportion'd to their sweetness.

1836.

LIGHTER LYRICS

SONG

My mind is my kingdom, but if thou wilt deign
A queen there to sway without measure,
Then come, o'er its wishes and homage to reign,
And make it an empire of pleasure.

Then of thoughts and emotions each mutinous crowd,
That rebell'd at stern reason and duty,
Returning—shall yield all their loyalty proud
To the Halcyon dominion of beauty.

1810.

SONG

Drink ye to her that each loves best,
And if you nurse a flame
That's told but to her mutual breast,
We will not ask her name.

Enough, while memory tranced and glad
Paints silently the fair,
That each should dream of joys he's had,
Or yet may hope to share.

Yet far, far hence be jest or boast
From hallow'd thoughts so dear;
But drink to her that each loves most,
As she would love to hear.

1822.

SONG

Oh, how hard it is to find
The one just suited to our mind!
And if that one should be
False, unkind, or found too late,
What can we do but sigh at fate,
And sing Woe's me—Woe's me?

Love's a boundless burning waste,
Where Bliss's stream we seldom taste,
And still more seldom flee
Suspense's thorns, Suspicion's stings;
Yet somehow Love a something brings
That's sweet—e'en when we sigh "Woe's me!"

1823.

SONG

Withdraw not yet those lips and fingers,
Whose touch to mine is rapture's spell;
Life's joy for us a moment lingers,
And death seems in the word—Farewell.
The hour that bids us part and go,
It sounds not yet,—oh! no, no, no!

Time, whilst I gaze upon thy sweetness,
Flies like a courser nigh the goal;
To-morrow where shall be his fleetness,
When thou art parted from my soul?
Our hearts shall beat, our tears shall flow,
But not together—no, no, no!

1823.

SONG

When Love came first to earth, the Spring
Spread rose-beds to receive him,
And back he vow'd his flight he'd wing
To Heaven, if she should leave him.

But Spring departing, saw his faith
Pledged to the next new-comer—
He revell'd in the warmer breath
And richer bowers of Summer.

Then sportive Autumn claim'd by rights
An Archer for her lover,
And even in Winter's dark cold nights
A charm he could discover.

Her routs and balls, and fireside joy,
For this time were his reasons—
In short, Young Love's a gallant boy,
That likes all times and seasons.

1829.

SONG

To Love in my heart, I exclaim'd t'other morning.
Thou hast dwelt here too long, little lodger, take warning;
Thou shalt tempt me no more from my life's sober duty,
To go gadding, bewitch'd by the young eyes of beauty.
For weary's the wooing, ah! weary,
When an old man will have a young dearie!

The god left my heart, at its surly reflections,
But came back on pretext of some sweet recollections,
And he made me forget what I ought to remember
That the rose-bud of June cannot bloom in November.
Ah! Tom, 'tis all o'er with thy gay days—
Write psalms, and not songs for the ladies.

But time's been so far from my wisdom enriching,
That the longer I live, beauty seems more bewitching;
And the only new lore my experience traces,
Is to find fresh enchantment in magical faces.
How weary is wisdom, how weary!
When one sits by a smiling young dearie!

And should she be wroth that my homage pursues her,
I will turn and retort on my lovely accuser;
Who's to blame, that my heart by your image is haunted?—
It is you, the enchantress—not I, the enchanted.
Would you have me behave more discreetly,
Beauty, look not so killingly sweetly.

1830.

SENEX'S SOLILOQUY ON HIS YOUTHFUL IDOL

PLATONIC friendship at your years,
Says Conscience, should content ye:
Nay, name not fondness to her ears,
The darling's scarcely twenty.

Yes, and she'll loathe me unforgiven,
To dote thus out of season;
But beauty is a beam from heaven,
That dazzles blind our reason.

I'll challenge Plato from the skies,
Yes, from his spheres harmonic,
To look in M—y C——'s eyes,
And try to be Platonic.

1834.

SONG

How delicious is the winning
Of a kiss at Love's beginning,
When two mutual hearts are sighing
For the knot there's no untying!

Yet, remember, 'midst your wooing,
Love has bliss, but Love has ruing;
Other smiles may make you fickle,
Tears for other charms may trickle.

Love he comes, and Love he tarries,
Just as fate or fancy carries;
Longest stays, when sorest chidden;
Laughs and flies, when press'd and bidden.

Bind the sea to slumber stilly,
Bind its odour to the lily,
Bind the aspen ne'er to quiver,
Then bind Love to last for ever!

Love's a fire that needs renewal
Of fresh beauty for its fuel;
Love's wing moults when caged and captured,
Only free, he soars enraptured.

Can you keep the bee from ranging,
Or the ringdove's neck from changing?
No! nor fetter'd Love from dying
In the knot there's no untying.

1836.

MARGARET AND DORA

MARGARET's beauteous—Grecian arts
Ne'er drew form completer,
Yet why, in my heart of hearts,
Hold I Dora's sweeter?

Dora's eyes of heavenly blue
Pass all painting's reach,
Ringdove's notes are discord to
The music of her speech.

Artists! Margaret's smile receive,
And on canvas show it;
But for perfect worship leave
Dora to her poet.

1836.

LATEST POEMS, 1837–1841

CORA LINN, OR THE FALLS OF THE CLYDE

WRITTEN ON REVISITING IT IN 1837

THE time I saw thee, Cora, last,
'Twas with congenial friends;
And calmer hours of pleasure past
My memory seldom sends.

It was as sweet an Autumn day
As ever shone on Clyde,
And Lanark's orchards all the way
Put forth their golden pride;

Ev'n hedges, busk'd in bravery,
Look'd rich that sunny morn;
The scarlet hip and blackberry
So prank'd September's thorn.

In Cora's glen the calm how deep!
That trees on loftiest hill
Like statues stood, or things asleep,
All motionless and still.

The torrent spoke, as if his noise
Bade earth be quiet round,
And give his loud and lonely voice
A more commanding sound.

His foam, beneath the yellow light
Of noon, came down like one
Continuous sheet of jaspers bright,
Broad rolling by the sun.

Dear Linn! let loftier falling floods
Have prouder names than thine;
And king of all, enthroned in woods,
Let Niagara shine.

Barbarian, let him shake his coasts
With reeking thunders far,
Extended like th' array of hosts
In broad, embattled war!

His voice appals the wilderness:
Approaching thine, we feel
A solemn, deep melodiousness,
That needs no louder peal.

More fury would but disenchant
Thy dream-inspiring din;
Be thou the Scottish Muse's haunt,
Romantic Cora Linn.

1837.

NAPOLEON AND THE BRITISH SAILOR

I LOVE contemplating—apart
From all his homicidal story,
The traits that soften to our heart
Napoleon's glory.

'Twas when his banners at Boulogne
Arm'd in our Island every freeman,
His navy chanced to capture one
Poor British seaman.

They suffer'd him—I know not how,
Unprison'd on the shore to roam;
Where evermore he bent his brow
On England's home.

Methinks his eye pursued the flight
Of glimmering sea-birds half-way over;
With envy *they* could reach the white,
Dear cliffs of Dover.

A stormy midnight watch, he thought,
Than this sojourn would have been dearer,
If but the storm his vessel brought
To England nearer.

At last, when care had banish'd sleep,
He saw one morning—dreaming—doating,
An empty hogshead from the deep
Come shoreward floating;

He hid it in a cave: he wrought
From every eye by daylight lurking,
And formed at last a tiny boat
By tedious working.

Heaven help us! 'twas a thing beyond
Description wretched: such a wherry
Perhaps ne'er ventured on a pond,
Or cross'd a ferry:—

For ploughing in the salt-sea field,
A thing to make the boldest shudder;

Untarr'd, uncompass'd, and unkeel'd,
No sail—no rudder.

From neighb'ring woods he interlaced
His sorry skiff with wattled willows;
And thus equipp'd he would have faced
The foaming billows—

But Frenchmen caught him on the beach,
His little Argo sorely jeering;
Till tidings of him chanced to reach
Napoleon's hearing.

With folded arms Napoleon stood,
Serene alike in peace and danger;
And, in his wonted attitude,
Address'd the stranger:—

"Rash man, that would'st yon Channel pass
On twigs and staves thus rudely fashion'd;
Thy heart with some sweet British lass
Must be impassion'd."

"I have no sweetheart," said the lad;
"But—absent long from one another—
Great was the longing that I had
To see my mother."

"And so thou shalt," Napoleon said,
"Ye've both my favour fairly won;
A noble mother must have bred
So brave a son."

He gave the tar a piece of gold,
And with a flag of truce commanded
He should be shipp'd for England Old,
And safely landed.

Our sailor oft could scantly shift
To find a dinner, plain and hearty;
But *never* changed the coin and gift
Of Bonaparté.

1838.

BENLOMOND

HADST thou a genius on thy peak,
What tales, white-headed Ben,
Could'st thou of ancient ages speak,
That mock th' historian's pen!

Thy long duration makes our lives
Seem but so many hours;
And likens, to the bees' frail hives,
Our most stupendous towers.

Temples and towers thou'st seen begun,
New creeds, new conquerors' sway;
And, like their shadows in the sun,
Hast seen them swept away.

Thy steadfast summit, heaven-allied
(Unlike life's little span),
Looks down, a Mentor, on the pride
Of perishable man.

1837.

THE CHILD AND HIND

COME, maids and matrons, to caress
Wiesbaden's gentle hind;
And, smiling, deck its glossy neck
With forest flowers entwined.

Your forest flowers are fair to show,
And landscapes to enjoy ;
But fairer is your friendly doe
That watch'd the sleeping boy.

'Twas after church—on Ascension day—
When organs ceased to sound,
Wiesbaden's people crowded gay
The deer-park's pleasant ground.

There, where Elysian meadows smile,
And noble trees upshoot,
The wild thyme and the camomile
Smell sweetly at their root ;

The aspen quivers nervously,
The oak stands stilly bold—
And climbing bindweed hangs on high
His bells of beaten gold.

Nor stops the eye till mountains shine
That bound a spacious view,
Beyond the lordly, lovely Rhine,
In visionary blue.

There, monuments of ages dark
Awaken thoughts sublime ;
Till, swifter than the steaming bark,
We mount the stream of time.

The ivy there old castles shades
That speak traditions high
Of minstrels—tournaments—crusades,
And mail-clad chivalry.

Here came a twelve years' married pair—
And with them wander'd free

Seven sons and daughters, blooming fair,
A gladsome sight to see.

Their Wilhelm, little innocent,
The youngest of the seven,
Was beautiful as painters paint
The cherubim of Heaven.

By turns he gave his hand, so dear,
To parent, sister, brother;
And each, that he was safe and near,
Confided in the other.

But Wilhelm loved the field-flowers bright,
With love beyond all measure;
And cull'd them with as keen delight
As misers gather treasure.

Unnoticed, he contrived to glide
Adown a greenwood alley,
By lilies lured—that grew beside
A streamlet in the valley;

And there, where under beech and birch
The rivulet meander'd,
He stray'd, till neither shout nor search
Could track where he had wander'd.

Still louder, with increasing dread,
They call'd his darling name;
But 'twas like speaking to the dead—
An echo only came.

Hours pass'd till evening's beetle roams,
And blackbird's songs begin;
Then all went back to happy homes,
Save Wilhelm's kith and kin.

The night came on—all others slept
Their cares away till morn ;
But sleepless, all night watch'd and wept
That family forlorn.

Betimes the town-crier had been sent
With loud bell, up and down ;
And told th' afflicting accident
Throughout Wiesbaden's town :

The father, too, ere morning smiled,
Had all his wealth uncoffer'd ;
And to the wight would bring his child
A thousand crowns had offer'd.

Dear friends, who would have blush'd to take
That guerdon from his hand,
Soon join'd in groups—for pity's sake,
The child-exploring band.

The news reach'd Nassau's Duke : ere earth
Was gladden'd by the lark,
He sent a hundred soldiers forth
To ransack all his park.

Their side-arms glitter'd through the wood,
With bugle-horns to sound ;
Would that on errand half so good
The soldier oft were found !

But though they roused up beast and bird
From many a nest and den,
No signal of success was heard
From all the hundred men.

A second morning's light expands,
Unfound the infant fair ;

And Wilhelm's household wring their hands,
Abandon'd to despair.

But, haply, a poor artisan
Search'd ceaslessly, till he
Found safe asleep the little one,
Beneath a beechen tree.

His hand still grasp'd a bunch of flowers;
And (true, though wondrous) near,
To sentry his reposing hours,
There stood a female deer—

Who dipp'd her horns at all that pass'd
The spot where Wilhelm lay;
Till force was had to hold her fast,
And bear the boy away.

Hail! sacred love of childhood—hail!
How sweet it is to trace
Thine instinct in Creation's scale,
Ev'n 'neath the human race.

To this poor wanderer of the wild
Speech, reason were unknown—
And yet she watch'd a sleeping child
As if it were her own;

And thou, Wiesbaden's artisan,
Restorer of the boy,
Was ever welcomed mortal man
With such a burst of joy?

The father's ecstasy—the mother's
Hysteric bosom's swell;
The sisters' sobs—the shout of brothers,
I have not power to tell.

The working man, with shoulders broad,
Took blithely to his wife
The thousand crowns ; a pleasant load,
That made him rich for life.

And Nassau's Duke the favourite took
Into his deer-park's centre,
To share a field with other pets
Where deer-slayer cannot enter.

There, whilst thou cropp'st thy flowery food
Each hand shall pat thee kind ;
And man shall never spill thy blood—
Wiesbaden's gentle hind.

1841.

On Getting Home

THE PORTRAIT OF A FEMALE CHILD

Six Years Old

PAINTED BY EUGENIO LATILLA

Type of the Cherubim above,
Come, live with me, and be my love !
Smile from my wall, dear roguish sprite,
By sunshine and by candle-light ;
For both look sweetly on thy traits :
Or, were the Lady Moon to gaze,
She'd welcome thee with lustre bland,
Like some young fay from Fairyland.
Cast in simplicity's own mould,
How canst thou be so manifold

In sportively distracting charms?
Thy lips—thine eyes—thy little arms
That wrap thy shoulders and thy head,
In homeliest shawl of netted thread,
Brown woollen net-work; yet it seeks
Accordance with thy lovely cheeks,
And more becomes thy beauty's bloom
Than any shawl from Cashmere's loom.
Thou hast not, to adorn thee, girl,
Flower, link of gold, or gem or pearl—
I would not let a ruby speck
The peeping whiteness of thy neck:
Thou need'st no casket, witching elf,
No gawd—thy toilet is thyself;
Not e'en a rose-bud from the bower,
Thyself a magnet—gem and flower.

My arch and playful little creature,
Thou hast a mind in every feature;
Thy brow, with its disparted locks,
Speaks language that translation mocks;
Thy lucid eyes so beam with soul,
They on the canvas seem to roll—
Instructing both my head and heart
To idolize the painter's art.
He marshals minds to Beauty's feast—
He is Humanity's high priest,
Who proves, by heavenly forms on earth,
How much this world of ours is worth.
Inspire me, child, with visions fair!
For children, in Creation, are
The only things that could be given
Back, and alive—unchanged—to Heaven.

1840.

THE PARROT OF MULL

A DOMESTIC ANECDOTE

THE deep affections of the breast,
That Heaven to living things imparts,
Are not exclusively possess'd
By human hearts.

A parrot, from the Spanish Main,
Full young, and early caged, came o'er
With bright wings, to the bleak domain
Of Mulla's shore.

To spicy groves where he had won
His plumage of resplendent hue,
His native fruits, and skies, and sun,
He bade adieu.

For these he changed the smoke of turf,
A heathery land and misty sky,
And turn'd on rocks and raging surf
His golden eye.

But, petted, in our climate cold
He lived and chatter'd many a day:
Until with age, from green and gold
His wings grew grey.

At last, when, blind and seeming dumb,
He scolded, laugh'd, and spoke no more,
A Spanish stranger chanced to come
To Mulla's shore;

He hail'd the bird in Spanish speech;
The bird in Spanish speech replied,
Flapp'd round his cage with joyous screech,
Dropt down, and died.

1839.

SONG OF THE COLONISTS DEPARTING FOR NEW ZEALAND

STEER, helmsman, till you steer our way
By stars beyond the line;
We go to found a realm, one day,
Like England's self to shine.

CHORUS

Cheer up—cheer up—our course we'll keep,
With dauntless heart and hand;
And when we've plough'd the stormy deep,
We'll plough a smiling land:—

A land, where beauties importune
The Briton to its bowers,
To sow but plenteous seeds, and prune
Luxuriant fruits and flowers.
Chorus.—Cheer up—cheer up, etc.

There, tracts uncheer'd by human words,
Seclusion's wildest holds,
Shall hear the lowing of our herds,
And tinkling of our folds.
Chorus.—Cheer up—cheer up, etc.

Like rubies set in gold, shall blush
  Our vineyards girt with corn ;
And wine, and oil, and gladness gush
  From Amalthea's horn.
Chorus.—Cheer up—cheer up, etc.

Britannia's pride is in our hearts,
  Her blood is in our veins—
We'll girdle earth with British arts,
  Like Ariel's magic chains.

CHORUS

Cheer up—cheer up—our course we'll keep,
  With dauntless heart and hand ;
And when we've plough'd the stormy deep,
  We'll plough a smiling land.

1841.

MOONLIGHT

The kiss that makes a maid's cheek flush
  Wroth, as if kissing were a sin,
  Amidst the Argus eyes and din
    And tell-tale glare of noon,
Brings but a murmur and a blush,
    Beneath the modest moon.

Ye days, gone—never to come back,
  When love return'd entranced me so,
  That still its pictures move and glow
    In the dark chamber of my heart ;
Leave not my memory's future track—
    I will not let you part.

'Twas moonlight, when my earliest love
First on my bosom dropt her head;
A moment then concentrated
The bliss of years, as if the spheres
Their course had faster driven,
And carried, Enoch-like above,
A living man to Heaven.

'Tis by the rolling moon we measure
The date between our nuptial night
And that blest hour which brings to light
The pledge of faith—the fruit of bliss;
When we impress upon the treasure
A father's earliest kiss.

The Moon's the Earth's enamour'd bride;
True to him in her very changes,
To other stars she never ranges:
Though, cross'd by him, sometimes she dips
Her light, in short offended pride,
And faints to an eclipse.

The fairies revel by her sheen;
'Tis only when the Moon's above
The fire-fly kindles into love,
And flashes light to show it:
The nightingale salutes her Queen
Of Heaven, her heav'nly poet.

Then ye that love—by moonlight gloom
Meet at my grave, and plight regard.
Oh! could I be the Orphéan bard
Of whom it is reported,
That nightingales sung o'er his tomb
Whilst lovers came and courted.

1841.

CHAUCER AND WINDSOR

LONG shalt thou flourish, Windsor! bodying forth
Chivalric times, and long shall live around
Thy Castle the old oaks of British birth,
Whose gnarled roots, tenacious and profound,
As with a lion's talons grasp the ground.
But should thy towers in ivied ruin rot,
There's one, thine inmate once, whose strain renown'd
Would interdict thy name to be forgot;
For Chaucer loved thy bowers and trode this very spot.

Chaucer! our Helicon's first fountain-stream,
Our morning star of song—that led the way
To welcome the long-after coming beam
Of Spenser's light and Shakespeare's perfect day.
Old England's fathers live in Chaucer's lay,
As if they ne'er had died. He group'd and drew
Their likeness with a spirit of life so gay,
That still they live and breathe in Fancy's view,
Fresh beings fraught with truth's imperishable hue.

LINES

SUGGESTED BY THE STATUE OF ARNOLD VON WINKELRIED, STANZ-UNTERWALDEN

INSPIRING and romantic Switzers' land,
Though mark'd with majesty by Nature's hand,
What charm ennobles most thy landscape's face?—
Th' heroic memory of thy native race—
Who forced tyrannic hosts to bleed or flee,

And made their rocks the ramparts of the free;
Their fastnesses roll'd back th' invading tide
Of conquest, and their mountains taught them pride.
Hence they have patriot names—in fancy's eye,
Bright as their glaciers glittering in the sky;
Patriots who make the pageantries of kings
Like shadows seem and unsubstantial things.
Their guiltless glory mocks oblivion's rust,
Imperishable, for their cause was just.

Heroes of old! to whom the Nine have strung
Their lyres, and spirit-stirring anthems sung;
Heroes of chivalry! whose banners grace
The aisles of many a consecrated place,
Confess how few of you can match in fame
The martyr Winkelried's immortal name!

TO A YOUNG LADY

WHO ASKED ME TO WRITE SOMETHING ORIGINAL FOR HER ALBUM

An original something, fair maid, you would win me
To write—but how shall I begin?
For I fear I have nothing original in me—
Excepting Original Sin.

LINES ON MY NEW CHILD-SWEETHEART

I hold it a religious duty
To love and worship children's beauty
They've least the taint of earthly clod,
They're freshest from the hand of God;

With heavenly looks they make us sure
The heaven that made them must be pure;
We love them not in earthly fashion,
But with a beatific passion.

I chanced to, yesterday, behold
A maiden child of beauty's mould;
'Twas near (more sacred was the scene)
The palace of our patriot Queen.
The little charmer to my view
Was sculpture brought to life anew,
Her eyes had a poetic glow,
Her pouting mouth was Cupid's bow:
And through her frock I could descry
Her neck and shoulders' symmetry.
'Twas obvious from her walk and gait
Her limbs were beautifully straight;
I stopp'd th' enchantress, and was told,
Though tall, she was but four years old.
Her guide so grave an aspect wore
I could not ask a question more;
But follow'd her. The little one
Threw backward ever and anon
Her lovely neck, as if to say,
'I know you love me, Mister Grey;"
For by its instinct childhood's eye
Is shrewd in physiognomy;
They well distinguish fawning art
From sterling fondness of the heart.

And so she flirted, like a true
Good woman, till we bade adieu.
'Twas then I with regret grew wild,
Oh, beauteous, interesting child!

Why ask'd I not thy home and name?
My courage fail'd me—more's the shame.
But where abides this jewel rare?
Oh, ye that own her, tell me where!
For sad it makes my heart and sore
To think I ne'er may meet her more.

1841.

TO THE SAME

A NEW POEM ON MY YOUNGEST SWEETHEART

Dear girl, be once again my theme,
Thou kindlest my prophetic dream;
I see the future—I foresee
The witching woman thou wilt be,
Magnificent in shape and size,
A pair of poems in thine eyes,
With nose half aquiline to speak
The conquest of the eagle's beak,
Slaying round thee human hearts by nines,
Like Sampson 'midst the Philistines.

I see a thousand votaries stand
Too timorous to ask thy hand;
I hear their pale lips, as they whine,
Breathe love-songs even worse than mine;
I hear some boldly speak a while,
Then rush from thy refusing smile
And plunge into the Ocean's brine,
Or suicidal Serpentine.

All this, my child, will be thy doom
When I am dead and in my tomb;

One thing will thrill my dust alone,
Thy tread on my sepulchral stone.
But ere I die let me pourtray
Thy bliss in beauty's perfect day :—
He'll come, the young and manly man—
A lover !—scorn him if you can ;
With pride and air to match your own,
He'll woo you in a gallant tone ;
And while your gratitude he earns,
You'll tremble, weep, and laugh by turns,
And he will press his suit until
You find him Mister Suitable.

Then go and wed, ye pair the prime
That ever link'd since Adam's time !
Old Adam, by the way, I grant
To Eve was scarcely half gallánt,
When he impeached her 'bout the apple
That stuck in his voracious thrapple.
From Eden they were driven !—ye twain
Will enter Paradise again.

1841.

THE LAUNCH OF A FIRST-RATE

WRITTEN ON WITNESSING THE SPECTACLE

ENGLAND hails thee with emotion,
Mightiest child of Naval art,
Heaven resounds thy welcome ! Ocean
Takes thee smiling to his heart.

Giant oaks of bold expansion
O'er seven hundred acres fell,
All to build thy noble mansion,
Where our hearts of oak shall dwell.

'Midst those trees the wild deer bounded,
Ages long ere we were born,
And our great-grandfathers sounded
Many a jovial hunting-horn.

Oaks that living did inherit
Grandeur from our earth and sky!
Still robust, the native spirit
In your timbers shall not die.

Ship to shine in martial story,
Thou shalt cleave the ocean's path
Freighted with Britannia's glory
And the thunders of her wrath.

Foes shall crowd their sails and fly thee,
Threat'ning havoc to their deck,
When afar they first descry thee,
Like the coming whirlwind's speck.

Gallant Bark! thy pomp and beauty
Storm nor battle e'er shall blast,
Whilst our tars in pride and duty
Nail thy colours to the mast.

1840.

TO MY NIECE, MARY CAMPBELL

Our friendship's not a stream to dry,
Or stop with angry jar;
A life-long planet in our sky—
No meteor-shooting star.

Thy playfulness and pleasant ways
Shall cheer my wintry track,
And give my old declining days
A second summer back!

Proud honesty protects our lot,
No dun infests our bowers;
Wealth's golden lamps illumine not
Brows more content than ours.

To think, too, thy remembrance fond
May love me after death,
Gives fancied happiness beyond
My lease of living breath.

Meanwhile thine intellects presage
A life-time rich in truth,
And make me feel th' advance of age
Retarded by thy youth!

Good-night! propitious dreams betide
Thy sleep!—awaken gay,
And we will make to-morrow glide
As cheerful as to-day!

1841.

NOTES

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

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SEPTEMBER 10, 1803: The dates of the poet's own letters in Dr. Beattie's *Life* leave no doubt of this, although it seems to be contradicted by an entry in a newspaper of 1803, which gives Oct. 18 as the day of the marriage.

3 *Translation from Euripides' Medea:* This and the following paraphrase were college exercises which the poet afterwards included amongst his published works. They were published with *The Pleasures of Hope* in 1799.

5 *Love and Madness:* This monody was written in 1795, and seems to have been revised in the following year. The draft of 1796 appears in Beattie's *Life*, vol. i. p. 166, with many small variations. I have adopted "o'er" for "on" in line 11 from the end, where the alteration may be a mere misprint. The poem was suggested by a criminal trial which fired young Campbell's sympathetic imagination. It was published with *The Pleasures of Hope* in 1799.

9 *The Wounded Hussar:* This also was amongst the pieces appended to the first edition of *The Pleasures of Hope.*

10 *Gilderoy:* First published with *The Pleasures of Hope* in 1799. *The Harper—ditto.*

13 *The Pleasures of Hope:* The alterations made in the poem before publication are mentioned in Beattie's *Life*, i. 251. They are more fully given in some MS. notes in my possession by one to whom the autograph copy of the draft had been shown in June 1848 by Mr. George Farquhar Graham (for

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13 whom see *Dict. Nat. Biog.*). To his information the following additional statement in the same MS. is probably due :—

"This seems to be the first draft of the poem as a continuous entire poem. It was originally in detached portions under different titles—such as *The Sailor*, *The Emigrant*, *The Mother and Child*, etc. But, at Dr. Anderson's suggestion, all these were woven into a continuous poem. . . . After *The Pleasures of Hope* was published, the author's mother was often heard to say, 'I mind when our Tam's book was a wee bit poemie.'"

The readings of the first edition quoted below were obtained for me by my late lamented friend John Scott, Esq., of Halkshill, who in 1901 collated the copy of ed. 1799 at the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, with the edition of 1830.

16 l. 1. "etherial" : "aerial," ed. 1799.

17 l. 58. "giant of the western star" : The mountain, imagined as visible from the Atlantic, is thought of as crowned with the evening star, rather than with the fire of a volcano.

,, l. 66. "Oonalaska's shore" : The name Unalaska is given in recent maps to an island in the Aleutian group off the Alaskan promontory; and Gen. Sir C. Wilson, K.C.B., remembers hearing of it when he served on a boundary Commission in 1862.

19 l. 120. "A Briton and a friend" : Don Patricio Gedd, a Scotch physician in one of the Spanish settlements, hospitably relieved Byron and his wretched associates, of which the Commodore speaks in the warmest terms of gratitude (C.).

22 l. 212. "latter" : "later," ed. 1799.

,, l. 214. "purple" : "radiant," ed. 1799.

,, l. 228. "her slumbering child" : "her little son," ed. 1799.

25 l. 325. "Where tigers steal along" : See Introd. p. xxv. In his rooms in London Campbell had a *spotted* "tiger-skin." American *Felidæ* are the Jaguar, the Puma, the Lynx, and the Catamount, or wild cat. The puma, or cougar, is sometimes called the American lion, although it is more allied to the leopard. It is called "cougouar" by the French, and "panther" by the Anglo-American hunters of the United States. The panther was formerly found in all except the coldest parts of America, but is now rare in North America, having been expelled by man. I owe this information to my friend Mr. J. George Rapelje. See *Gertrude of Wyoming*,

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25 Pt. I. st. xvii. and Pt. III. st. xiv. with C.'s note as below. By the time when he had composed *Gertrude*, he knew better than in writing *The Pleasures of Hope*.

25 l. 338. "Wild Obi flies": Among the Negroes of the West Indies Obi or Obiah is the name of a magical power which is believed by them to affect the object of its malignity with dismal calamities (C.).

32 l. 582. "the alarmed world": "the prostrate world," ed. 1799.

33 l. 600. "Shall Seriswattee, etc.": Camdeo is the god of love in the mythology of the Hindos. Ganesa and Seriswattee correspond to the Pagan deities Janus and Minerva (C.).

Pt. II. in the copy collated by Mr. Scott has only 326 lines, the poem having been largely augmented in a second issue which was printed some months afterwards. See Beattie's *Life*, i. 266.

34 l. 12. "Torneo's hoary brow"; A mountain in the north of Scandinavia.

38 l. 747. "Thy woes, Arion": See Falconer's *Shipwreck*, Canto iii. (C.).

38 l. 760. "The robber Moor": See Schiller's tragedy of *The Robbers*, Scene v. (C.).

40 l. 822. "And part, like Ajut": See the history of Ajut and Anningait in *The Rambler* (C.).

41 ll. 869, 870. "The moon-eyed herald of Dismay": The allusion suggests some drawing (of a bale-star) in the manner of Blake.

45 ll. 1011 ff.: This is the episode so much admired by Mme. de Staël.

51 *Caroline:* The poet himself has dated *Caroline* "Edinburgh, 1801": *i.e.* the poem was completed after the publication of *The Pleasures of Hope*. This is confirmed by the style, which is more highly wrought than that of the earlier poems. But it does not dispose of the doubt whether Caroline Fraser, the Minister's daughter of Inveraray, or a certain Caroline Pye was

> "The summer pilot of an empty heart
> Unto the shores of nothing."

The question is whether the two pieces were composed at one heat, or whether, in Wordsworth's phrase, Part II. at

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51 all events "took its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity."

55 *Ode to Winter*, third st., l. 3 from the end: The editions read "lead," corrected to "lend" by Mr. W. T. Webb in his *Selections from Campbell*, Macmillan, 1902.

,, st. iv. l. 6. "On yonder tented shores": The ode was written in Germany in time of war.

59 *On leaving a Scene in Bavaria*, last line of st. x.: "The friendless"—"Misfortune" in ed. 1830, with "her" in what follows.

63 *A Scene in Argyleshire:* "the home of my forefathers:" Kirnan, Kilmichael-Glassary, Argyleshire.

66 *Ye Mariners:* Sts. i., ii., iii., "the stormy winds do blow"—"the stormy tempests blow," edd. 1809, 1830.

67 st. iii. "o'er the mountain-waves:" "on the mountain-waves," ed. 1809.

69 *Lochiël:* "'Tis thine, oh Glenullin!"—"'Tis the barb of Glenullin," ed. 1809.

,, l. 11. "Glenullin": He was evidently one of the chiefs who fell at Culloden, but has not been identified.

,, l. 22. "Lochiël": so printed, with diæresis, here and elsewhere in the poem in ed. 1809.

70 l. 9. "all dreadfully": "all fearfully," ed. 1809.

,, ll. 11-13.—"Oh, crested Lochiël, . . . return": "Oh, chieftain, whose tow'r on the mountain shall burn, Return to thy dwelling, all lonely return," ed. 1809.

,, l. 23. "Woe to his cause": "Woe to their cause," ed. 1809.

,, l. 24. "Albin": Scotland, particularly the Highlands (C.).

,, l. 26. "Clanronald": "Clanranald," edd. 1809, 180.

71 l. 5. "Lo! anointed": "Anointed," ed. 1809.

,, l. 11. "The iron-bound prisoner": From a letter of Lord Minto's in Beattie's *Life of Campbell*, vol. i. p. 410, it appears that this refers to Lochiël's brother, Dr. Archibald Cameron, who, as Mr. Andrew Lang informs me, was betrayed by two of his clansmen at the time of the Elibank Plot—some years after the death of Lochiël—and was hanged "on the old score of 1745."

,, l. 12. "For the red eye of battle": "When the red eye," ed. 1809.

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71 l. 17. "Oh! mercy, dispel": "Let mercy dispel," ed. 1809.

,, l. 25. "For never shall Albin . . . surf-beaten shore": Omitted in ed. 1809.

,, ll. 31-33. "Shall victor . . . fame"—

"Shall victor exult in the battle's acclaim,—
Or look to yon heaven, from the deathbed of fame,"
ed. 1809.

73 *Lord Ullin's Daughter:* "Lochgyle": — not Loch Goil, the branch of Loch Long, familiar to tourists, but Loch na Ghial (pron. "Keal"), the deep inlet on the west coast of Mull in which the island of Ulva is situated.

76 *The Battle of the Baltic*, st. iii.

"'Hearts of oak!' our captains cried": So, not "captain," in edd. 1809, 1830, and 1837.

77 st. vii. "By thy wild and stormy steep": Compare *Hamlet*, i. iv.

"What if it tempt you toward the flood, my Lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea."

Though Campbell had been in Denmark, he had not seen Elsinore.

,, st. viii. "With the gallant good Riou": Captain Riou, justly styled "the gallant and the good" by Lord Nelson when he wrote his despatches (C.).

80. l. 11. Alluding to the tradition that the art arose from a young Corinthian female tracing the shadow of her lover's profile on the wall as he lay asleep (C.).

83 *Gertrude of Wyoming—A Pennsylvanian Tale:* So on title-page of ed. 1809 (in the half-title "Or the Pensylvanian (*sic*) cottage"). Campbell's Wyoming is not to be confused with the State of that name. It is a place in Pennsylvania in the valley of the Susquehanna, still much admired for its romantic beauty.

86 Pt. i. st. v. "Thy pellochs": The Gaelic appellation for the porpoise (C.).

86 Pt. i. st. v.—"Corbrechtan": The great whirlpool of the Western Hebrides (C.).

90 Pt. i. st. xvi. "Areouski": The (Red) Indian god of war (C.).

98 Pt. ii. st. xii. "And nought within the grove was seen or

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98 heard" : The editions, clearly by a printer's error, give "heard or seen." In ed. 1809 the lines are :—

"For save her presence, scarce an ear had heard
The stock-dove plaining thro' its gloom profound."

Pt. iii. st. xiv. "Nor cougar's crouch" : Cougur, the American tiger (C.).

108 Pt. iii. st. xvi. "The Monster Brandt" : Campbell was afterwards persuaded that this Indian (Mohawk) chief had been maligned, and begged his readers to consider Brandt in the poem as "a pure and declared character of fiction" (ed. 1830, note).

119 *O'Connor's Child:* Maria Edgeworth wrote in a letter to a friend in April 1811, "Have you seen Campbell's poem of *O'Connor's Child?* In many parts I think it is superior to Scott"; and again, some days later, "Do get *O'Connor's Child*—Campbell's beautiful poem."

119 st. i. "Innisfail" : Ireland (C.). "No fear"—so ed. 1830; "no fears" in 1810? and later editions.

119 st. i. "The lovely pale O'Connor's Child," ed. 1810.

120 st. ii. "her brother's kerne," ed. 1810.

"The lovely pale O'Connor's child," ed. 1810.

120 st. iii. "Plac'd in the foxglove," edd. 1810, 1830, 1837.

121 st. iv. "those are shadows," edd. 1810, 1830, 1837.

,, st. iv. "Mórat" : A drink made of the juice of mulberry mixed with honey (C.).

122 st. v. "bear," edd. 1830, 1837; "bare," ed. 1810; "bore" in later edd.

123 st. viii. "Clarshech" : The harp (C.).

124 st. x. "Aye me! it was," ed. 1810.

126 st. xiii. "Oh stranger!" ed. 1810.

127 st. xiv. "Athunree." The battle fought in 1314, which decided the fate of Ireland (C.).

,, st. xv. "Thrice ten Innisfallian clans," ed. 1810: *ib.* two lines at end of stanza—

"But once again in heav'n the bands
Of thunder spirits clapt their hands."

ed. 1810.

143 *Hallowed Ground*, st. vi. from end: "That man can bless," so edd. 1830 and 1837; later editions "men."

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148 *Men of England*, st. iii. "If the freedom"—"Patriotism" for "freedom" ed. 1830.

156 l. 10. *Reullura:* "Lochlin"—Denmark (C.).

157 l. 10. "back on his shoulder": so ed. 1830; later editions, "o'er."

,, l. 19. "Then uprose": so edd. 1830 and 1837; later editions "up rose."

158 l. 5. "millstone crushes": so ed. 1830; later edd. "millstones crush."

161 *Earl March:* "And *he* look'd up": her love look'd up," ed. 1830.

194 *Ode to the Germans:* "Broad Stone of Honour"—Ehrenbreitstein (C.).

203 *Ode to the Memory of Burns:* "Edward that died at Waterloo": Major Edward Hodge of the 7th Hussars, who fell at the head of his squadron in the attack of the Polish Lancers (C.).

208 *Lines on a Seal:* "poets' fancies," so ed. 1843; "poet's" ed. 1830 and Aldine edition.

209 l. 17. "That won the Lady of the West": A Norman leader in the service of the King of Scotland married the heiress of Lochow, and from him the Campbells are sprung (C.).

210 *To Edward Lytton Bulwer:* Published in ed. 1830, but omitted—for obvious reasons—in later editions.

215 *My mind is my kingdom:* This song was copied for me from ed. 1810 by Mr. F. G. Kenyon. It was never reprinted.

,, *Drink Ye to Her:* Last two lines—"But drink to her . . . as she would love to hear":—"to them"—"as they," ed. 1830.

224 *Napoleon and the British Sailor:* I have restored some readings from a MS. facsimile of a draft sent by the poet to his sister Mary.

235 *Song of the Emigrants:* Bishop Selwyn sailed to New Zealand in 1841.

236 *Moonlight:* "that makes"; so in the poet's original draft; "that would make," edd. *contra metrum.*

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